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# 12,000 Attend MENC Biennial in Chicago

By LOUIS O. PALMER

**D**URING the last week of March, 12,000 music educators and students descended upon the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago for the fourteenth biennial meeting of the Music Educators National Conference. The figure alone reveals much of the nature of such an event; a group this size is a gargantuan creating its own special set of problems. It is a credit to the organization at top-official level that most of the problems concerning the physical comforts of this gathering were satisfactorily solved.

Teachers from all over the country—often with whole groups of their students in tow—came to the conference with enthusiasm in their faces and voices, and when the sessions were over they left having felt the stimulation of exchanged views and opinions in their own field of specialization.

To provide adequate coverage at all instruction levels and in all fields of interest for such numbers was an impossible task at the outset, but the program for the week was set up with a monumental attempt at just that. At the peak of the conference, a delegate had to make his choice from 46 simultaneous meetings during the course of one morning and make a similar decision that same afternoon. The conference equivalent of table-hopping was of no use here, for a brief attempt at trying a bit of one session and then moving on to another soon proved how impossible it was to predict at which point the session would offer the real core of the discussion.

Behind MENC is no power to enforce rules, regulations and curricula standards. It is a suggestive body, not an authoritative one. And so the major emphasis of this biennial conference was placed on the experience of music and the rights of all to have that experience at its best. Throughout the many sessions, quality of materials was frequently and heavily stressed, with the implication that music of an ephemeral or inferior nature is a detriment to the fulfillment of these functions. These were the sentiments heard most frequently from the many podiums, yet when performing groups followed speakers much of the music fell into the category condemned minutes earlier.

On a nationwide scale, raising standards of materials is a slow evolutionary process, no doubt. What was played and sung for the audiences of this convention was of a higher calibre than it has been in previous

years. Nevertheless, it is a pity many of the conductors of the performing groups at this conference could not have been taken in hand, with the sound of applause still in their ears, and led to the main exhibit rooms where music publishers had set up displays of the fine material that could and should be used.

Two encouraging trends were uncovered in these student performances, however. First of all, the choruses were of a uniformly high calibre. For the most part, their material was worthy of their efforts. Second, throughout the conference, emphasis was placed upon chamber music as enriching the student's experience in music and as an influence in his post-student days. Reaction to these chamber-music concerts came as a surprise to the directors of MENC. Crowds pressing for entrance to these events were so great the programs had to be moved from the intimate halls scheduled to the large ones.

For the first time in the history of MENC, school bands had to share top spot on the program with school and community orchestras. It was MENC's hope thus to stimulate interest in a musical activity it feels should be a vital part of all community life and an outlet for the talents it is fostering in our young musicians, both amateur and professional. To this end, the orchestra workshops were well organized, and the participating groups from comparatively small cities were remarkably able.

The tendencies in emphasis seen in this conference are the results of policies put into effect by the governing body for the past two years in MENC. In a sense, the week's events represent the culmination of those policies. There is every indication the newly elected board now coming into office will make no radical changes in direction. In an exclusive interview with this correspondent, the new president of MENC, Robert A. Choate, dean of the music school of Boston University, spoke with conviction of his belief in music's place in the community. He feels it must not be kept purely in the schools but made a community-wide and indigenous project. He is wholeheartedly behind the conference's emphasis upon the experience of music by children and adults alike, rather than further exploration and diversification of teaching methods.

## Cruz of Teaching Problem

Here lies the crux of MENC's problem, as reflected in its fourteenth biennial: it is torn between improvement of both instruction and materials, and the importance of doing a big job in music education for the bulk of the citizens of the United States. It wants to reach out to touch everyone with the rewarding experience they know music can give, without sacrificing standards. In this sense, the conference was a qualified success. Its workshop demonstrations were packed, its lectures on methods well attended. It is not unreasonable to suppose the enthusiasm and enlightened spirit generated by these will have an effect in better teaching. Its programs of music certainly were

calculated to allow a musical experience to all kinds of people. Performance levels were generally high, and in several instances they were professional. Qualification enters the picture only at the level of worth in the music selected. Here MENC, as a representative of the nation at large it hopes to reach, still has room to grow.

In addition to Robert A. Choate as president, the conference elected the following new officers: vice-president, Anne O'Callaghan, supervisor of music, Atlanta Public High Schools; members-at-large, Richard C. Berg, of Springfield, Mass.; Lloyd V. Funchess, of Baton Rouge, La.; and Mary I. Tolbert, of Columbus, Ohio.

Among the first important steps for this incoming board of directors was the selection of St. Louis as the site for the 1956 meeting. The Music Industry Council, without whose help these conferences would be impossible, elected the following board of officers: president, George White, of Silver Burdette Company; vice-president, Benjamin Grasso, of Associated Music Publishers; secretary-treasurer, Ray Sacher, of RCA Victor; directors, Leonard Feist, of Mercury Music Corporation; Ernest Ostwald, of Uniforms by Ostwald; Katherine Jackson, of Music Publishers Holding Corporation; and Clarence Foy, of Theodore Presser Company.

(Picture on page 4)

## Toscanini Drops Baton in Finale To 68-Year Career as Conductor

**A**RTURO TOSCANINI has conducted his last NBC Symphony concert, and by all indications has culminated his 68-year career on the podium. The last chapter in the professional life of one of the most illustrious figures in the history of the performing art was written on April 4, only ten days after the veteran conductor's 87th birthday.

At 6:30 in the early evening of that day, Mr. Toscanini stepped before a capacity audience at Carnegie Hall and raised his baton to conduct the opening work in an all-Wagner program that he had chosen to conclude

podium to conduct the so-called Forest Murmurs extract from Siegfried and, from *Götterdämmerung*, the Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey music. He turned only once to acknowledge the audience's applause, and then reluctantly.

Following a brief intermission, the conductor returned for the Overture and *Bacchanale* from *Tannhäuser* and the *Prelude to Act I of Die*



NBC Photo



© Aime Dupont

1908 - 1954

Left: A photograph of Toscanini taken during his final NBC Symphony concert. Above: As he appeared in 1908 when he came to his country as chief Italian conductor of the Metropolitan Opera

Meistersinger. The *Tannhäuser* Venusberg music reached a luminous climax in the *Bacchanale*, as Mr. Toscanini turned animatedly from one section of the orchestra to another, calling for more volume and more tone. But as the excitement subsided, he leaned against the back rail of the podium and bowed his head, listening almost detachedly to the distant murmurings of the strings that close this excerpt. He barely moved his hands. There was a moment of uncertainty among the musicians, and entrances were tentative. Frank Miller, the orchestra's first cellist, in view of most of the players, guided them to the end of the work.

Virtually without hesitation, Mr. Toscanini launched into the *Die Meistersinger* Prelude, but his baton did little more than set the pace. He had already stepped off the podium as the last note sounded. He let his baton slip to the floor (a conscientious orchestra member picked it up and returned it to him) and walked slowly off stage. He did not return.

It is not known whether Mr. Toscanini will make any further public appearances. His immediate plans include a few new recordings for RCA

(Continued on page 33)

## Boston Symphony Signed By NBC for 1954-55 Series

The Boston Symphony's Saturday night concerts in Symphony Hall will be broadcast during the 1954-55 season by the NBC network. The weekly programs will replace those of the NBC Symphony, which is expected to be disbanded following its current spring series.



# Metropolitan Schedule for 1954-55 To Include Premiere of Strauss Opera

TWO new productions are scheduled for the 1954-55 season at the Metropolitan Opera, one being that of Giordano's *Andrea Chenier*, which has not been heard at the opera house in 24 years. The conductor will be Fausto Cleva, and Dino Yannopoulos will serve as stage director. The other new production, to be unveiled during the second half of the season, will be the American premiere of Richard Strauss's *Arabella*, with an English version of the Hofmannsthal libretto by John Gutman. The Strauss opera will be conducted by the German conductor Rudolf Kempe, who will be making his first appearances in this country. The stage direction will be handled by Herbert Graf, and the sets and costumes will be designed by Rolf Gerard.

Operas being revived at the Metropolitan next year are Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, last seen in 1947-48, Don Carlo, and Otello; Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*; Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and Tosca; Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, absent from the repertory since 1941-42; Wagner's *Die Meistersinger*, and Tristan und Isolde; and Strauss's *Salome*, which will be paired with an original ballet not as yet chosen.

The Metropolitan's 1954-55 season of 22 weeks, opening Nov. 8, will also bring repeats of *Aida*, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *La Bohème*, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *Pagliacci*, Don Giovanni, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *La Traviata*, *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Parsifal*, and *Tannhäuser*—making for a repertory totaling 24 operas.

Another announcement concerning the coming season at the opera house lists a series of changes in admission prices. The first twelve rows of orchestra seats, which now cost \$8.00 each, will be sold for \$8.50 next year, and the last two rows of seats will be reduced to \$6.50 each for nearly all performances, as will seats in the first five parterre boxes on either side of the house. Other seat prices will be increased by 25 or thirty cents, giving

the Metropolitan a total of \$20,000 additional revenue for the season.

An important entry in the 1953-54 budget is the Metropolitan Opera Fund, which is less than \$200,000 from attaining its goal of \$1,250,000. Speaking in an intermission period during the radio broadcast of *Norma* on March 27, George A. Sloan, board chairman of the Metropolitan, gave a breakdown of the \$1,068,000 that has been received through the fund drive, some \$375,000 of which had already been spent on repairs in the house. The remainder, he said, would see the company through the summer and next season.

## Stadium Concerts Set Summer Dates

The 37th summer season of concerts at Lewisohn Stadium will open on June 21 and will extend six weeks through July 31. As in previous years the outdoor concerts will be given five nights a week with the usual variety of guest artists and special nights.

Pierre Monteux has been engaged for five concerts this summer, and Alexander Smallens, who celebrated his twentieth anniversary as a Stadium conductor last year, will return to lead the Stadium Symphony in four programs. Andre Kostelanetz will again be on hand for two of the semi-popular Saturday night concerts.

Other conductors announced for the 1954 season are Sir Adrian Boult, who will make his first local appearance since 1949 conducting the first four concerts and two others during the third week; and Thomas Scherman, who will make his Stadium debut conducting five concerts.

Despite mounting operation costs, it has been decided by Stadium Concerts, Inc., of which Mrs. Charles S. Guggenheimer is chairman, to keep the price of admissions to the original minimum set up for the series at its founding in 1918. Unreserved seats will again be priced from thirty cents to \$1.20. Reserved field chair seats will sell at the customary \$2.40 top.



Courtesy Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Marvin McDonald, concert manager of the All Star Series in Atlanta, Ga., is presented with a wrist watch honoring his two decades of activity in this post. Frederick C. Schang, president of Columbia Artists Management, at left, extends congratulations, seconded by Jennie Tourel, mezzo-soprano, and Mrs. Lewis M. Dugger, right, president of the Atlanta Music Club

## McDonald Feted On Anniversary

ATLANTA.—In celebration of his twenty years as concert manager of the All Star Concert Series, Marvin McDonald was honored by the Atlanta Music Club at a gala reception, following the club's final event of the season, the Jennie Tourel recital on March 25. Features of the occasion were the gift of a handsome wrist watch, a huge anniversary cake, and reading of congratulatory telegrams from his colleagues throughout the country.

Mrs. Lewis M. Dugger, president of the Atlanta Music Club, made the presentation, paying tribute to Mr. McDonald for the many valuable services he had rendered to the community. The latter responded in characteristic jovial style.

It was in 1934 that the southern impresario organized the All Star Concert Series in Atlanta. Since then, Mr. McDonald has broadened his field of activity to the management of concerts in Savannah, Ga.; Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Greensboro, N. C.; Columbia, S. C.; and several Florida cities. He established the

Marvin McDonald Award Fund, which assists young artists towards a career, and he is a member of the board of directors of the Atlanta Music Club and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Guild. In addition, he is known throughout the country through his presidency of the National Association of Concert Managers.

The closing feature of the festivities was the cutting of the cake, with Miss Tourel assisting Mr. McDonald. The master of ceremonies was Charles Jagels. Impromptu speeches were made by F. C. Schang, president of Columbia Artists Management, of New York, and Ed Danforth, of Atlanta.

—HELEN KNOX SPAIN

## Central City Selects Strauss, Gounod Operas

DENVER — Gounod's *Faust* and Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos* will be the two musical attractions at Central City, Colo., this summer, the Gounod opera opening the season on June 26 for a run of 21 performances. The first performance of *Ariadne* will be given on July 3 and will alternate with *Faust* for thirteen performances through July 24.



OUTGOING AND INCOMING OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MUSIC EDUCATORS NATIONAL CONFERENCE

From the left, seated: Wiley L. Housewright, executive committee (1954-56) and president, Southern Division, Tallahassee, Fla.; Harriet Nordholm, executive committee (1954-56) and president, North Central Division, East Lansing, Mich.; Paul Van Bodegraven, executive committee (1954-56) and member-at-large, New York City; Vanett Lawler, associate executive-secretary; Ralph E. Rush, president, (1952-54) and first vice-president (1954-56), Los Angeles; Robert A. Choate,

newly elected president (1954-56), Boston; C. V. Buttelman, executive-secretary; Anne Grace O'Callaghan, second vice-president (1954-56), Atlanta; William R. Sur, executive committee (1954-56) and member-at-large, East Lansing; Mary M. Hunter, executive committee (1954-56) and president, Eastern Division, Baltimore.

Standing: E. E. Mohr, president, Southwestern Division, Greeley, Colo.; Marguerite V. Hood, first vice-president (1952-54), Ann Arbor,

Mich.; Leslie H. Armstrong, executive committee (1952-54), Olympia, Wash.; A. Bert Christianson, president, Northwest Division, Ellensburg, Wash.; Gladys Tipton, executive committee (1952-54), Los Angeles; Lloyd V. Funchess, member-at-large (1954-58), Baton Rouge, La.; Arthur G. Harrell, president, National Interscholastic Music Activities Commission, Wichita, Kan.; Benjamin V. Grasso, president, Music Education Exhibitors Association (1952-54), New York City; Gerald Whitney,

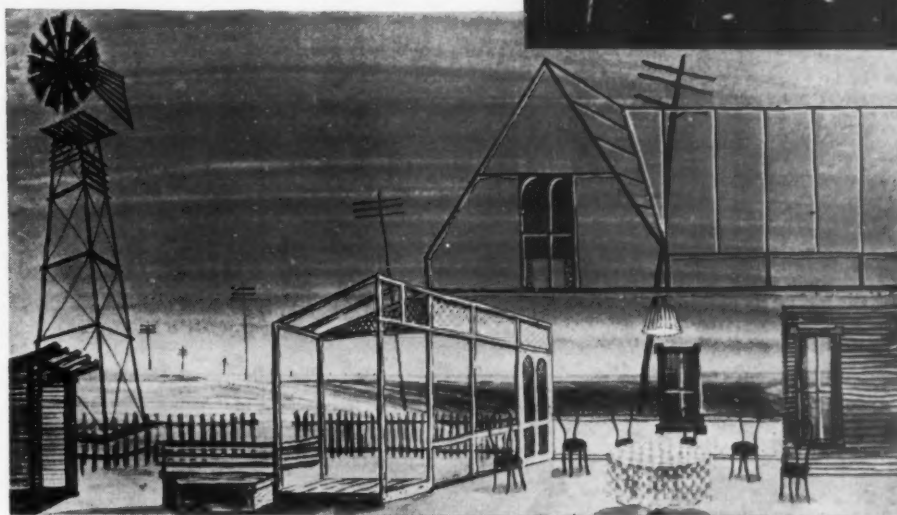
executive committee (1952-54), Tulsa, Okla.; George L. White, president, Music Industry Council (1954-56), New York City; Richard C. Berg, member-at-large (1954-58), Springfield, Mass.; George F. Barr, president, California-Western Division, Sacramento, Calif.; John H. Jaquish, member-at-large (1952-54), Atlantic City, N. J.; Mary Tolbert, member-at-large (1954-58), and William B. McBride, second vice-president (1952-54), both of Columbus; Gratia Boyle, member-at-large (1950-54), Wichita.



# NEW COPLAND OPERA

*The Tender Land, set in midwest America,  
is given premiere by New York City Opera*

By RONALD EYER



Oliver Smith's sketch for the second-act set of *The Tender Land*. Above: Norman Treigle, Jean Handzlik, and Rosemary Carlos in a scene from the Copland opera

**A**ARON COPLAND'S first serious essay in operatic form, *The Tender Land*, received its premiere by the New York City Opera, at the City Center on April 1. In two acts, a bit over an hour in total playing-time, the work concerns people "on a lower-middle-class farm in the Midwest. The time is the early 1930s—June—the time of spring graduation and spring harvest", according to the libretto.

It is important to get the substance of the book in mind at the outset because one's judgment of the success or failure of the opera is bound up with one's opinion of the dramatic structure. Based upon an idea of Copland's, the text is by Horace Everett, and it tells the story of a rural family whose daughter is about to be graduated, presumably from high school during the depression years. The girl, Laurie, is uncertain of her place in the world, and she dreams vaguely of a larger life. At this point, two itinerant young harvesters appear and are engaged by Grandpa to help with the crop. That evening there is a graduation party for Laurie, attended by the two boys. One of them, Martin, falls in love with her, and Grandpa, distrustful of all strangers, discovers the match and orders the boys off the place. Laurie and Martin then plot an elopement for the next morning.

During the night, Martin loses confidence and courage and decamps with his cynical companion. When, at dawn, Laurie finds the boys gone, she is heartbroken, but she decides she must go out into the world anyhow, even if alone. Her mother, Ma Moss, not recognizing the woman her daughter suddenly has become, tries to dissuade her, but without success, and Laurie goes off down the road, purposeful but ungraduated. Ma Moss then turns to her younger daughter, Beth, with the realization that "one responsibility has ended and another has begun".

Things begin promisingly enough. The dramatic lines are swiftly drawn, and the element of suspense mounts steadily during the first act, when the

boys are introduced as suspected ne'er-do-wells, rapists or worse, and we see the mutual attraction between them and Laurie; the fears of Ma Moss, who has mistaken the boys for two notorious rowdies; and the ferocious suspicions and protective instincts of Grandpa. Powerful basic forces are now in conflict, and one confidently anticipates a gripping dramatic climax and a satisfactory catharsis in the second act.

## A Tenuous Subject

But nothing of the kind happens. Instead of coming to grips, the forces retreat and dissipate; the dramatic drives of the first act stop cold, and the entire plot evaporates into an indecisive, thoroughly unconvincing nimbus that leaves both the opera and the audience with both feet, so to speak, off the ground.

While it is possible to get away with a wispy, irresolute idea such as this in ballet, where both drama and music are subordinate to a third principal, I am convinced it cannot be done in opera, where the dramatic verities must rule, just as they do in a play, and where the all-important music must draw its inspiration from the dramatic development. It is not surprising, therefore, that most of the good music in this opera is in the first act and in the first part of the second act before things begin falling apart dramatically. Following some very respectable arias and concerted numbers for Ma, Laurie, Martin, and others, the first act ends with a stunning quintet, *The Promise of Living*.

The second act opens with a square dance at the party, in which the chorus both dances and sings (another high point, musically), and this is followed presently by the love duet between Laurie and Martin—an "I

love you, I love you, I do" kind of song in which Copland winks ever so slyly in the direction of Broadway.

The music as a whole gives the curious impression of being of two distinct varieties simultaneously. The vocal music is relatively simple and is built mostly along conventional diatonic, chromatic, and choral lines. It sings easily and well, and Copland's prosody is impeccable. He also handles recitative and parlando with a sure, natural touch.

Against this is an orchestral fabric that is far more complex and sophisticated and bears many of the hallmarks of Copland's familiar style of harmonization and instrumentation. Inevitably there are overtones of his Appalachian Spring and other more bucolic works, but they are not amiss in this pastoral setting. As usual, the composer does not labor sharp dissonance but uses it mainly to underline momentary dramatic conflict. I had the feeling much of the time that the vocal score could easily be divorced from the orchestral music and rewired to a quite different, and perhaps simpler, accompaniment with no essential loss of effect. And I could not be sure but that some parts of the orchestral music might not be viable in themselves and eventually turn up successfully in another form after the opera is forgotten—and forgotten I fear it will be unless Copland decides it would be worthwhile to go back and revise the second act.

The most heartening discovery I made during the performance is that Copland is potentially a very good vocal writer and melodist. He has the true lyrical sense, and he knows how to build a vocal line for sonority, cumulative emotional expressiveness and dramatic impact. In this opera, however, he seems to be self-con-

sciously restraining his naturally lyrical impulses and clipping them in mid-flight as though he did not completely trust their trajectory and destination. It is to be hoped that Copland is not embarrassed by a fashionable notion that emotional lyricism today must be handled gingerly and obliquely, if at all.

The production was an earnest and attractive one. The severe, skeletal setting and the imaginatively conceived lighting had precisely the right atmosphere. The cast, carefully prepared, was imbued with the spirit of the work and delivered some excellent individual performances. Mr. Schippers threw himself with his usual vigor into the conducting of the score. And Mr. Robbins' stage direction (the first he had undertaken outside the dance world) was natural at the same time that it was graceful and artistic.

## Newcomers to Company

Two newcomers to the company of singers—Jean Handzlik (Ma Moss) and Rosemary Carlos (Laurie)—made highly favorable first impressions vocally as well as dramatically. Both possess voices of considerable power and technical polish, and they created their roles with realism and understanding. Norman Treigle gave a fine performance, musically, of Grandpa Moss, although he tended to overdo the stiff-legged gait of the elderly farmer. Jon Crain, as Martin, and Andrew Gainey, as Top, the two drifters, handled their assignments convincingly for the most part. Mr. Crain had some difficulty with his top tones in the love duet, however. Michael Pollock added a touch of homespun authenticity in his role as Mr. Splinters, the postman. The dramatically important role (non-sing-

(Continued on page 8)

## THE TENDER LAND

Opera in two acts. Music by Aaron Copland. Libretto by Horace Everett. Conducted by Thomas Schippers. Staged by Jerome Robbins. Settings by Oliver Smith. Costumes by John Boyt. Lighting by Jean Rosenthal. Choreography by John Butler. Presented in a double bill with Gian-Carlo Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* by the New York City Opera at the City Center on April 1.

### CAST:

Beth.....Adele Newton (debut)  
Ma Moss.....Jean Handzlik (debut)  
Mr. Splinters.....Michael Pollock  
Laurie Moss.....Rosemary Carlos (debut)  
Top.....Andrew Gainey  
Martin.....Jon Crain  
Grandpa Moss.....Norman Treigle  
Mr. Jenks.....Thomas Powell  
Mrs. Splinters.....Mary Krete  
Mrs. Jenks.....Teresa Gannon

# PITTSBURGH AND ROCHESTER ORCHESTRAS APPEAR IN NEW YORK

## Cavelti Makes Debut With Pittsburgh Symphony

Pittsburgh Symphony, William Steinberg, conductor. Elsa Cavelti, contralto; David Lloyd, tenor. Carnegie Hall, April 2:

Symphony No. 2, B flat major. Schubert  
Das Lied von der Erde. . . . . Mahler

Elsa Cavelti, Swiss contralto who has been heard both in opera and concert in Europe and South America, made her American debut in this concert, as one of the soloists in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*. Miss Cavelti had sung the music under William Steinberg's baton at La Scala, Milan, in a concert last June. Her voice is a true contralto, large in volume, lustrous in quality, sensuous in coloring, and, at its best, ringing in power. In this concert, the lower tones sounded hollow and unsupported at times, and the top tones tended to be forced and spread. But these were minor flaws in singing of real beauty and eloquence.



Elsa Cavelti

Interpretatively speaking, Miss Cavelti understood both the poetry and the music profoundly. She sang with deeply moving eloquence.

Mr. Steinberg's conception of the Mahler work was disappointingly stiff and matter-of-fact. He conducted the score with impeccable authority, but with little of the plastic feeling for phrase and the emotional surge that it requires. Nor did he allow his singers enough time to shape their words and lines properly; he tended to treat the voices like orchestral instruments, although Mahler obviously did not write their parts with that intention. Mr. Lloyd sang forcefully and competently, but he, too, failed to capture the full emotional significance of the verse and music, notably in the exquisite poem, *Der Trunkene im Frühling*.

The Schubert symphony was brilliantly played. There was no doubt that Mr. Steinberg has brought the orchestra to an enviable state of technical polish and musical discipline. In this work, more sympathetic to his temperament, he was a far more persuasive interpreter. Even when it was a bit heavy, the playing was delightfully clear in texture and rhythmically precise and energetic.

—R. S.

## Rochestra Philharmonic, Rutgers Choir in Beethoven's Ninth

Rochester Philharmonic, Erich Leinsdorf, conductor. Rutgers University Choir, F. Austin Walter, director. Irene Jordan, soprano; Nell Rankin, mezzo-soprano; Walter Fredericks, tenor; Mack Harrell, baritone; Luis Pichardo, bass. Carnegie Hall, March 26:

Prologue and Coronation Scene from  
Boris Godounoff. . . . . Moussorgsky  
Symphony No. 9. . . . . Beethoven

The large musical assemblage provided for this concert taxed the capacity of the Carnegie Hall stage, as the audience did its auditorium. The Boris scenes had been orchestrated by Mr. Leinsdorf, and the English version of John Gutman was employed. Despite a few unsolved details in the relation between chorus and orchestra,

which resulted in some blurred outlines, it was clear that Mr. Leinsdorf has molded a fine instrument in the Rochester players. Mr. Harrell sang ably and eloquently the music of Boris, and the other roles were well sustained by Mr. Fredericks and Mr. Pichardo. The choral work (save for some fine soprano singing) was lacking in bite and conviction.

The Ninth Symphony, on the other hand, was a performance of skill and mastery. Mr. Leinsdorf made a particular effect with his reading of the Largo, one of lofty conception and adequate tonal realization. The vocal quartet was a particularly able one, with Miss Jordan's luminous and full-toned soprano, Mr. Harrell's mellow baritone, Miss Rankin's rich contralto, and Mr. Fredericks' tenor of vibrant sort and amplitude. The choral performance revealed excellent training, which conferred credit on the chorus's director, F. Austin Walter.

—R. M. K.

## Little Orchestra Ends Season

Little Orchestra Society, Thomas Scherman, conductor. Town Hall, March 8:

Suite from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*; *Ariadne auf Naxos*. . . Strauss

Thomas Scherman closed his current season with the Little Orchestra Society with a resounding bang. This English-language presentation of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, seen in a semi-dramatized concert version, was very probably Mr. Scherman's finest musical achievement to date; although the evening's singing-actors quite clearly stole the show, the conductor is to be congratulated for integrating and pacing so splendid an operatic performance.

As is well known by all who heard *Ariadne* at the New York City Center several years ago, the opera contains some of the composer's most vital, bubbly, and engaging music—light-serious music of the most meticulous craftsmanship, and of the most remarkable preciseness of musico-comic effect. And for those who are partial to it, the opera also contains a full measure of this composer's rather lardy post-Wagnerian lyricism, also of good quality. But for this reviewer, at least, the lighter sections of the work are its specific charm.

Mariquita Moll was a slender, lovely *Ariadne*, and she sang her music with ringing tone and clarity of diction. Mattiwilda Dobbs, young American coloratura soprano who has won acclaim in opera abroad, made her New York debut as Zerbinetta. She sang her big aria so brilliantly that, on its

conclusion, Mr. Scherman's usually dignified audience was cheering like a well-paid Metropolitan clique. Zerbinetta's vis-a-vis, Arlecchino, was played by Robert Goss, who sang ever so sturdily and acted with his customary talent and authority. In vocal matters Set Svanholm was a Bacchus in fine heroic style. Also in the cast were Edith Gordon, Evelyn Corvello, and Madeline Vose, as Naiad, Echo, and Dryad, and Lawrence Avery, Karl Brock, and William Diehl, as Brighella, Scaramuccio, and Truffaldino. They were every one of them exemplary.

—W. F.

## American Chamber Opera Society Town Hall, March 10

Once again, the American Chamber Opera Society proved to us that there are masterpieces gathering dust on our shelves just as great as those that are still heard regularly in our opera houses. Rossini's tragi-comedy, *La Gazza Ladra* (*The Thieving Magpie*) abounds in such charming melodies, such brilliant and solidly-wrought ensembles, such powerfully evocative dramatic music that it is hard to understand why it has been so long absent from the repertoire. Like *La Cenerentola*, which the New York City Opera revived so delightfully a year ago, *La Gazza Ladra* is absolutely first-rate in every respect. Arnold U. Gamson had assembled an excellent cast, and he conducted with unflagging verve and emotional intensity. Small wonder that the audience was completely captivated.

*La Gazza Ladra* is a much more interesting opera, from the human point of view, than the more purely comical *Barber of Seville*. The heroine, Ninetta, a servant girl, narrowly escapes execution for a crime of which she is innocent; her lover, Gianetto, is a fierier and more forceful lover than the Count Almaviva; Isacca, the peddler, is almost as comical as Basilio; the Podestà is a more complex and realistic figure than Bartolo. In short, Rossini found in the libretto of *La Gazza Ladra* a challenge to his deeper sympathies and his interest in widely divergent types of human personality.

The role of Ninetta is both vocally and dramatically exacting. It must be performed seriously enough to be convincing in tragic episodes yet never without a touch of deft charm. Laurel Hurley's voice sounded fresh and lovely throughout the evening, and she created a believable character, without the aid of scenery and other stage devices. By allowing the artists a certain amount of gesture, movement, and suggestions of stage costume, Mr. Gamson enhanced the dra-

matic persuasiveness of the performance.

Charles Anthony showed a commendable sense of style in his singing of the role of Gianetto, Ninetta's suitor. Lawrence Avery made the figure of the peddler, Isacca, irresistibly amusing and sang well, to boot. Salvatore Baccaloni, always authoritative and bubbling over with energy, was admirable in the role of the rascally Podestà. Paul Ukena brought dignity as well as vocal ability to the role of Ninetta's father, Fernando. Also excellent were Jean Schneck, as Pippo; Lee Cass, as Fabrizio; Ruth Kobart, as Lucia; and Thomas Lo Monaco, in spite of a stentorian method of vocal production, as Giorgio. The Concert Choir, of which Margaret Hillis is director, sang the choral episodes.

—R. S.

## Berlioz' Romeo and Juliet

In presenting Berlioz' *Romeo and Juliet* in Carnegie Hall on March 10 and 13, Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony performed a great service to local concertgoers. It will be a rare occasion when we again hear this music conducted with such insight and authority or played by an orchestra as schooled in the Berlioz style.

The *Romeo and Juliet* Symphony is undoubtedly a *tour de force*, and like most unique and courageous works it has its enthusiastic devotees as well as its violent critics. The writer must confess that, even after hearing this superb performance, he remains fairly neutral. However, of all the composers who have attempted to capture in musical terms the drama and poetic richness of the Shakespeare play, none has come closer than Berlioz.

In writing his *Romeo and Juliet*, Berlioz drew inspiration from another source—the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven, which was completed only sixteen years earlier. In *Romeo*, though, Berlioz assigned the chorus a more important role in the structure of the work, introducing his thematic materials by way of a Prologue with choral recitative. The Prologue, and the vocal music that makes up the first movement of the Symphony, is thus essential to a full appreciation of the instrumental sections that frequently turn up on concert programs. Mercutio's Mab speech, with its choral echoes, prefigures the famous Queen Mab Scherzo, itself serving as an interlude between the orchestral drama of the Love Scene, a sort of symphonic adagio, and its apotheosis in the Finale.

As in Beethoven, the Finale of this work has the impact of the universal. The Capulets and the Montagues become more than just rival households but parties to a larger ideological conflict. It is by virtue of this unique musical characterization and the function of the chorus and soloists in the plan of the work as a whole that Berlioz defines his "dramatic symphony" as being neither a cantata nor an opera in concert form. The work may not reach its peaks of musical intensity in the vocal sections, and the Deschamps text is admittedly banal in spots, but for one listener these sections revealed the composer at the height of his powers as the interpreter of a great legend.

The Harvard and Radcliffe choruses were well prepared for their role in the proceedings by G. W. Woodworth and sang with stunning clarity and articulation. The soloists—Mary Davenport, contralto; John McCollum, tenor; and Yi-Kwei Sze, bass—were also distinguished in their efforts.

(Continued on page 13)



Erich Leinsdorf (left), conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic, gives instructions to Stanley Street, percussionist, concerning the bells for the Coronation Scene in Boris Godounoff, presented in its New York concert (Photograph by Jim Osborn, Rochester Times-Union)



# New Operas

## In Triple Bill

## At La Scala

**Rise Stevens scores personal success  
in premiere of controversial work**

By REGINALD SMITH BRINDLE

**T**HERE was an electric excitement in La Scala on March 24 for the first performances of three contemporary one-act operas. Virgilio Mortari's *La Figlia del Diavolo* (commissioned by this opera house) and Mario Peragallo's *La Gita in Campagna* were absolute novelties. To play safe, the program was completed by an already proved work—Menotti's *Amelia al Ballo*, dating from 1934, of which this was a first Milan performance.

The scores by Menotti and Mortari received enthusiastic approval, while that of Peragallo roused one of the most animated scenes of protest this theatre has known. There were whistles and catcalls, aimed rather at the opera than its interpreters.

For *The Devil's Daughter*, the American mezzo-soprano Risé Stevens had been called from the Metropolitan to sustain the difficult role of Herodias. This is the only sung female part and one making not only considerable vocal demands but requiring a keen stage sense and unusual flexibility of characterization. Despite the controversy aroused by the opera itself, Miss Stevens achieved a notable personal success in her Italian debut.

The work is based on the episode of Salome and John the Baptist but is presented (with emphasis on the grotesque) according to the old legend in which Herodias appeared not only as diabolical but actually possessed by the devil, who through her destroys the apostle.

### Risky Undertaking

To compose again a subject that Richard Strauss has so completely possessed is a risky undertaking, but it must be said at once that Mortari's work does not resemble that of Strauss in anything but the identification of the characters. To indicate that Salome is here only a mute dancer receiving in the end Divine pardon is sufficient to show where the difference begins.

The Mortari opera is presented largely as a "*sacra rappresentazione*", great effect being obtained from the use of three choirs, one on the stage with realistic function, another in the orchestra and employed in an instrumental manner, and a third behind the scenes for abstract use. Thus Mortari obtains three planes of choral

sound, which he uses with most original effect.

As a composer he is an independent, holding no creeds, but putting to use modern devices in many a page of powerful writing. He creates in this opera a fine atmosphere of antiquity and tends—if anything—toward the Pizzetti manner.

The scenery for *La Figlia del Diavolo*, which uses three sets, was by the noted Italian painter Gianfilippo Usellini. The poet Corrado Pavolini, on whose libretto the work is based, staged the production himself.

Risë Stevens, who had the main responsibility of animating the scene, revealed herself to be an actress of a high order, overcoming the difficult part of Herodias—with its many facets of tragic, lyric, nostalgic and diabolical sentiments—with consummate ease. With her excellent musicianship and fine fullness of voice (especially at its upper and lower extremities) she garnered and was responsible for such of the success as was achieved in this first performance.

The press verdicts on her work were all in more or less degree enthusiastic. The critic of *La Patrie* wrote that Miss Stevens is "a singer of great vocal powers and an actress of the first calibre. She animated the scene with her intense playing, with contrasting expressions, appropriate gestures and excellent musicianship". The reviewer for *L'Italia* affirmed that "even though there were no real emotions in the opera, emotions were nevertheless projected through the dynamism and through the admirable interpretative powers of Risé Stevens, an evil and seductive Herodias. In her incarnation the Devil certainly was victorious. However, her stunning craft was not able to save the opera, in our opinion."

With Nino Sanzogno conducting, the remaining roles were played by Giangiacomo Guelfi (Herod), Wladimir Badiali (The Eunuch), Mario Ortica (John), and the dancer Giuliana Barabaschi (Salome). There were many curtain calls at the end of the work.

Mario Peragallo's *The Ride into the Country* is, on the contrary, based on a completely realistic and topical subject. The story is taken from Moravia's *Towards the People*, without attaining that transformation into poetic form that is so necessary for

operatic use. The story is simply that of a young couple who go out for a ride in their car. They have to stop because the radiator is empty. Upon going to a nearby shack to ask for water, they meet a family that through hunger has been reduced to thieving. The whole affair ends with the young pair robbed of everything they have, including their clothes.

There is, of course, nothing wrong with a plot such as this; everything depends on its treatment, and here is where Peragallo made his error. He failed to give the work any of those tragic, comic, or lyrical aspects that are the foundation of opera—the magic transformation of common events that makes them emerge as the highest art.

This is a twelve-tone work, but the fact has nothing to do with its failure. The result would have been the same in any idiom. The Scala public was very patient, but after a quarter of an hour of harmless functional music, without any melodic aspect or any real attempt to create a situation of dramatic interest, the guffaws and whistles began. They grew by the time that the opera ended in a storm of violent abuse, which expressed the public's violent disapproval in stronger terms than, perhaps, the opera house has ever witnessed. Elegant ladies shook their fists at the stage, and blows were exchanged in various parts of the theatre.

### Genuine Hostility

When an artist has sincerely striven to create a work of art, it is difficult to approve such violent hostility as was shown towards Peragallo. But this abuse was born of sheer irritation and was certainly not caused by any preconceived opinions. It was rather the genuine reaction of an art-loving public against something that seemed unworthy. One must give credit to Nino Sanzogno, the conductor, for bringing the work calmly to its conclusion under these circumstances.

*Amelia Goes to the Ball* was produced under the stage direction of Menotti himself. He was revealed as a master of the theatre, and though this work is twenty years old, it retains its capacity to divert and hold the attention of the public. The work went well and received the unquestioned approval of the Scala public.



Photographs by Elio Piccagliani

Left: Risé Stevens as Herodias in *La Figlia del Diavolo*, her debut role at La Scala. Above is the bridal-chamber scene, designed by Gianfilippo Usellini

## Cantelli Extends Philharmonic Stint

Guido Cantelli, who will serve as a guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony next year for the fourth consecutive season, will conduct eight weeks of concerts, doubling the number of appearances he has made in the past. Mr. Cantelli signed an agreement to extend the length of his engagement in 1954-55 at the request of Dimitri Mitropoulos, the orchestra's musical director. Mr. Mitropoulos will conduct only twelve of the 28 weeks of the season, instead of his usual sixteen, in order to fulfill his commitments as guest conductor of the Metropolitan Opera.

Mr. Cantelli's engagement with the Philharmonic will fall into two four-week periods, one beginning Jan. 10 and the other beginning in March. In addition to these concerts he will share the podium with Mr. Mitropoulos on the orchestra's coast-to-coast tour in April and May of 1955.

## Bethlehem Festival To Repeat Programs

BETHLEHEM, PENNA.—The annual Bach Festival here, originally scheduled for just May 13, 14, and 15, will be repeated in part on May 21 and 22. Vocal soloists with the chorus, under Ifor Jones's direction, will be Janet Southwick, soprano; Lilian Knowles, contralto; John McCollum and Joseph Victor Laderoute, tenors; Kenneth Smith and Chester Watson, basses. Miss Southwick and Mr. McCollum will be new to the festival this year.

# REVIVAL OF SALOME OPENS CITY OPERA SPRING SEASON



In Salome: Phyllis Curtin, right, in the title role; Ernest McChesney as Herod; Mary Krete as Herodias

Tabbot

THE New York City Opera opened its spring season on March 25 with a revival of Salome that displayed the company at its best. Although most of the singers were new to their roles, the performance was well knit and dramatically gripping; and the orchestra under Joseph Rosenstock played with remarkable color, fluency, and emotional intensity. The Strauss opera had not been given at the City Center since 1947, and on this occasion, in its twelfth performance by the company, it took on new meanings and shadings, thanks to Mr. Rosenstock's artistry and the talent and energy of the artists. Without the massive orchestra, without the lavish staging and display of larger, more opulent opera houses, the company contrived to build the work to a stunning climax that roused the audience to a long and well-deserved ovation at the close.

Although no fewer than nine of the singers were new to their roles, only one was new to the company: Ernest McChesney, who made his debut in the role of Herod. Mr. McChesney gave an excellent performance, in which the neurotic personality and lascivious tendencies of the tetrarch were vividly conveyed without becoming grotesque. He drove his voice hard at times, but he sang with authority and he obviously knew exactly what he was singing about. Herod's frantic offers of his treasures, for example, were clearly enunciated and differentiated.

## Astounding First Performance

Phyllis Curtin, who sang the role of Salome for the first time, was nothing short of astounding. After a rather tame and colorless entrance, she built the performance dramatically to a magnificent final scene, and she sang the role as well or better than any soprano who has essayed it in New York in many years. Her tones were pure, fascinatingly colored, and fresh, even throughout the merciless final pages of the score. She executed the dance with grace and sensuous abandon; and she managed the apostrophe

to the head of Jokanaan with notable skill. Less flamboyant than some of the Salomes we have heard in recent years, she was musically subtler and psychologically more convincing. Her Salome was an incredibly perverse and self-willed girl, but still a girl, curiously naive and almost sentimental in some respects. It was a truly original characterization that may well grow into one of the best Salomes of our time.

The other artists who were new to their roles were Jon Crain, as Narraboth; Alfred Medinets, as the Third Jew; Michael Pollock, as the Fourth Jew; Thomas Powell, as the Cappadocian; Charles Kuestner, as a Slave; William Wilderman, as the First Nazarene; Dawin Emanuel, as the Second Nazarene; and Norman Treigle, as the First Soldier. All of them had been carefully trained, and all of them sang well. Mr. Crain was too emphatic, which made his voice sound hard and strained in quality at times, but he conveyed the anguish of the young officer very movingly. All that he needs to do is to sing more easily and let his dramatic points take effect without forcing them. The famous quintet of the Jews was especially well done, and the various bit parts were all smoothly performed.

Walter Cassel sang the role of Jokanaan with broad, ringing tones. This role can be wooden in the hands of an artist who does not study the implications of the text, but Mr. Cassel made his audience sense the rude fanaticism and glowing faith of the prophet. His physical gesture was right in feeling, but it could be improved in plastic detail, especially in the movements of the hands and arms, which were occasionally too limp. Especially vivid was his denunciation of Salome. It was suffused with genuine loathing, which made the music doubly effective. Mary Krete was a vigorous, if vocally rough, Herodias; and Frances Bible was wonderfully boyish as the Page who has such a tender interest in Narraboth.

Interest in the revival of Salome was so great that an extra perform-

ance had to be scheduled. Mr. Rosenstock and his artists deserve warmest congratulations. —ROBERT SABIN

## Rigoletto, March 26

Julius Rudel's lucid, precise, and admirably paced accounting of the orchestral aspects of Verdi's Rigoletto was the finest achievement of this performance. Walter Cassel, as Rigoletto, was not in his best voice, having sung the role of Jokanaan in Salome the night before. Eva Likova was a decorative Gilda but her singing was wanting in pitch-accuracy, ease, and flexibility. Rudolf Petrak sang capably as the Duke, and Lucretia West, singing Maddalena for the first time, displayed a lovely, warm voice; it lacked (probably due to debut uncertainty) the necessary edge to cut through the orchestra and project satisfactorily. The rest of the cast included Mary Krete as Giovanna, Richard Wentworth as Monterone, Arthur Newman as Marullo, Michael Pollack as Borsa, Leon Lishner as Ceprano, Mary Le Sawyer as Countess Ceprano, and Lila Caputo as the Page. —W. F.

## Carmen, March 27

Madeline Chambers made her New York City Opera debut, as Micaëla, and Peggy Bonini hers, as Frasquita, in this splendidly paced, beautifully sung performance of Bizet's Carmen. Miss Chambers was young and attractive, and her singing was highly cultivated, very musical, and sure. Her voice was a pretty one, too. Her acting as Micaëla was direct, simple, and without coyness and sentimentality. Miss Chambers would appear to be a valuable asset to the company. The title role was sung by Rosemary Kuhlmann, Don José by Robert Rounseville, Escamillo by Cornell MacNeil, Mercedes by Lucretia West. Norman Treigle, Michael Pollock, Emile Renan, and Richard Torigi completed the cast, conducted by Joseph Rosenstock. —W. F.

## La Traviata, March 28, 2:30

The first performance at the City Center this spring of La Traviata, relegated to a Sunday afternoon, was no routine affair. The Violetta of Frances Yeend has been maturing steadily, and it may be that her recent tour abroad has accelerated this process. In any case, her portrayal was both exciting and moving. The expressivity in singing was wide in range, always opposite, and seemingly deeply felt. The undiminished brilliance of the soprano's voice in climactic passages was thus doubly effective, and she provided an electrifying moment as she launched into the Gran Dio!

Aided by the fresh, highly intelligent staging of the opera by Glenn

## Tender Land

(Continued from page 5)  
ing) of the little sister, Beth, was played with admirable restraint by Adele Newton.

It is worthy of note that The Tender Land was commissioned through the League of Composers by Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II. A capacity audience, including many distinguished figures in music and the theatre, was on hand for this premiere and applauded all of the participants, including the composer, with warmth and affection.

The evening was filled out with the City Opera's tenth performance of Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors, in which Bill McIver made his City Center debut as Amahl. Others in the cast were Rosemary Kuhlmann, the Mother; Michael Pollock, Kaspar; Lawrence Winters, Melchior; Richard Wentworth, Balthazar; William Starling, the Page; Felisa Conde, the Shepherdess; John Butler and Glen Tetley, the Shepherds. Mr. Schippers conducted.



Anna Russell as the Witch in Hansel and Gretel

Jordan, Miss Yeend's performance was also impressive in dramatic terms. Jon Crain and Walter Cassel, the Alfredo and Giorgio Germont, had likewise profited from the restudied version; they sang the text with careful attention to its meaning and established characters of considerable depth and naturalness.

The smaller roles were beautifully integrated into the action and were performed with distinction by Mary LeSawyer, Flora; Mary Krete, Annina; Luigi Vellucci, Gaston; Arthur Newman, Douphol; Emile Renan, D'Obigny; and Leon Lishner, Grenville. Glen Tetley and Felisa Conde were the soloists in John Butler's comical ballet. Thomas P. Martin's conducting had gained in flexibility and style over last fall's performances. All in all, it was a production of which the City Center could be proud. —R. A. E.

## The Marriage of Figaro, April 2

Lawrence Winters, singing Count Almaviva for the first time at the City Center, gave a convincing performance, vocally and histrionically. His Count was a sort of naive sophisticate, smooth and polished, yet obtuse and dull-witted enough to be a perfect foil for the quick-witted Figaro of Ralph Herbert. The otherwise familiar cast included Ellen Faull as the Countess, Laurel Hurley as Susanna, Frances Bible as Cherubino, Emile Renan as Dr. Bartolo, and Mary Krete as Marcellina. The roles of Don Basilio, Don Curzio, Antonio, and Barbarina were sung by Luigi Vellucci, Michael Pollock, Arthur Newman, and Peggy Bonini, respectively. Except for a rather perfunctory reading of the Overture, Joseph Rosenstock kept things moving at a lively pace. With the members of the cast in top form, the performance was a delightful one. —R. K.

## Hansel and Gretel, April 3, 2:30

Some of the shrewdest ticket-buyers of the season turned out to be the parents of the several hundred youngsters who made a children's matinee out of the City Center's first performance this season of Hansel and Gretel. Perhaps never has Humpdink's little masterpiece sounded or looked to better advantage. Everything was of a piece—the conducting, the staging, and for the most part the singing. Last but not least, the occasion marked the local opera debut of Anna Russell, the concert comedienne.

Miss Russell was triumphant. To an adult, at any rate, her performance of the Witch partook variously of the qualities of Hermione Gingold and Beatrice Lillie, with overtones of Mae West. But what must have pleased her more than grown-up guffaws was the spontaneous burst of applause from innumerable small hands that greeted her disappearance (Continued on page 25)



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# MELODIOUS SCOT

**Democratic himself, William Primrose**

**gives aristocratic status to viola**

By FRANK MERKLING

**Y**OU might call William Primrose a rugged individualist. Clichés, however, are out of place when applied to the famous violist. To talk to him is a refreshing experience because his personality defies pigeon-holing; he won't be typed. No sooner do you think you have him impaled on a point of view than he wriggles off by saying or doing something that doesn't "fit", something that forces you to revise your total impression of him.

The uninformed impression—from having heard his name, from knowing a little about the viola and its repertoire, or even from having seen him across the antiseptic spaces of a Carnegie Hall—is likely to be a mild one: Mr. Primrose, the sandy-haired savior of a neglected instrument. But when you meet the gentleman face to face, such an impression turns out to be uninformed indeed. In the first place, you discover that there is nothing very mild about his manner or his opinions—that is, unless you would consider tossing the caber a mild form of exercise, or downing a mess of haggis mild fare. (Not that Mr. Primrose is addicted to either.)

For the artist is invincibly Scottish. He hails from Glasgow, and his mildness, one learns, is no more than skin-deep. To be sure, he is ruddy and blue-eyed, under pale brows and lashes and reddish hair; but he is also solid and hearty and restless. His manner is forthright. His British accent catches now and then on a prickly burr. He loves walking and finds overheated rooms unbearable. (When I visited him one blustery day in his hotel room looking north over Central Park, he had the window raised a crack through which there blew a mournful diapason. "I can't turn the blasted heat off," he explained genially.) He is one artist who finds, or used to find, an outlet in boxing. Nowadays the outlet tends to be cricket or chess; happily for Primrose, his accompanist, David Stimer, is an accomplished chess player.

All this may suggest tweeds, gnarled walking sticks, and a shooting box in the Highlands. But—contradiction No. 2—if Mr. Primrose is Caledonian he is Bohemian to boot. True enough, when I saw him he did have on an oatmeal tweed jacket, but he also had on light tan slacks, buckled brown suede shoes, a navy-blue wool shirt, and a bright yellow raw-silk tie. Furthermore, he admitted to a fondness for the good things of life: "I enjoy eating, smoking, and drinking—until my Presbyterian conscience raises its head! I'm afraid I have to watch all three."

## Fond of Travel

Unlike many people who spend most of their lives on the road, Mr. Primrose thrives on it. He loves to travel. He prefers ships and trains to planes, which he finds make him tense. "My address," he will tell you contentedly, "is 'Pullman Car, U. S. A.'" Actually he has had other, more permanent addresses in this country since he first arrived in 1930: in New York ("But I don't like living here"); in Philadelphia, where for eight years he taught at the Curtis Institute; in Connecticut. Recently he and his family—wife and two children—took a house in Santa Fe, that sagebrush outpost of Greenwich Village. Mr. Primrose is impressed by the American West—perhaps because there are plenty of places to walk and no overheated rooms. Last year he visited Aspen, Colo., both to perform and to teach, and he liked it so much he will go there again this summer. "Aspen reminds me somehow of Aldeburgh, the English festival town," he said, thought-

fully balancing one leg across the other. "One is up in the mountains, of course, and the other is by the sea. But there's something about them—a certain spirit."

Mrs. Primrose, an American, paints—but more than this your reporter was unable to learn about the Family Primrose. Its head confessed to some diffidence when it came to "the homey touches," as he called them—private life, hobbies, tastes and preferences, etc. "When I'm reading about other people I always skip that sort of thing," he said with an affable smile, and so I skipped that sort of thing too. But not before I learned that he does a good deal of reading about other people. His taste in books, at least, runs to biography (contemporary), history (ditto)—the Churchill volumes he regards as a must—and whodunits as long as they are not by Mickey Spillane.

During the winter season the violist has less time than he would like for reading, and hardly any for teaching. He has no time at all for television, a medium on the subject of which the Scotsman waxes impatient. "Oh, I don't doubt that it has possibilities," he says, "but I don't see much in the way of actualities. Frankly I'm terrified at the idea of commercial TV in Britain." After a pause he added palliatively, "I'm afraid that when the British imitate American standards, as here or in advertising or the cinema, they tend to fall flat on their face." He did not seem overly optimistic about TV's chances for winning a larger audience for good music. "I don't believe you can 'popularize' good music, or good art generally. Either the receptivity is there or it isn't. Maybe it's more a question of varying attitudes toward art. In Europe, for example, I find that music is a necessity; here it is entertainment. Be that as it may, I am all for the subsidy of opera and orchestras in the States," he ventured briskly. "I don't feel it's at all socialistic in Europe, so why here?"

In general, Mr. Primrose finds little opportunity in America to play new music. He thinks our big cities, particularly, are bad bets for modern works. "Audiences on the whole simply don't respond. Sometimes, however, I do underestimate them. Sometimes I sense that an audience will take an unusual program after all—it's funny how you can tell almost by looking at them—and as like as not I'll change the program then and there. Usually this happens in some university town or other." His practice of changing warhorses in midstream, musically speaking, pays off in most cases, he feels. "At least intelligent young people

will try to like a modern work, and if they don't like it they will ask you why. (I think they embrace music these days as an antidote to TV.) Once in Michigan I was playing a piece by Alban Berg—or was it Anton von Webern? Anyway, during the intermission one earnest young woman came up to me and complained that the music was Greek to her. I replied by asking her how she would go about understanding a book written in Greek."

Mr. Primrose himself is at home in most musical "languages", but he avows that he has yet to master Schönberg's. He has tried, but the idiom of the dodecaphonic messiah still eludes him, although he has no trouble with the work of such disciples as Berg and Webern. Otherwise he plays no favorites. "I like most composers," he says. If he had to single out a work that he is exceptionally fond of playing, it might be Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher*, a kind of concerto, for viola and an orchestra without upper strings, based on medieval folk songs. He remembers a time when he performed the work with Ernest Ansermet and the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande*. After it was over, a lady approached Ansermet and took him to task for programming such modern music. (She may have been an American.) "Modern!" exclaimed the bearded conductor. "Madame, that is music of the Middle Ages."

## A Champion of Causes

Another side of the versatile violist is the crusader, the champion of causes. As a loyal subject of the Crown, he naturally espouses the cause of British composers, especially if they write for the viola. Apparently those who do are legion. Mr. Primrose is particularly enthusiastic about two of them, Peter Racine Fricker and Edmund Rubbra. Rubbra, it appears, has written a viola concerto that manages to run its 24 minutes without the help of a single passage of virtuoso display.

Mr. Primrose tires of pointing out that the viola is more than a sort of hybrid instrument midway between the cello and the violin, and difficult to play. It is not a neglected instrument at all, he insists; at least not any longer. Contrary to popular belief—and the evidence of innumerable concert programs notwithstanding—Harold in Italy

(Continued on page 15)



William Primrose in two favorite occupations. At left he ponders a gambit with the international chess champion Herman Stainer; at right, waits for a bowl in his favorite game of cricket



Nancy Ross





## Scouting Originals

I think I mentioned a while back the lengths to which the New England Opera Theatre sometimes will go to assure authentic musical performance of the works it produces. Its director, Boris Goldovsky, makes frequent inquiries throughout the world as to details in operatic scores that he suspects have been subjected to revisions, deletions, augmentations and other changes in the printed editions of them available to us today.

This summer, Mr. Goldovsky's assistant, Sarah Caldwell, will be off to Europe in search of "lost" passages in Carmen, Faust, and Rigoletto, if found, they will be restored in projected stagings of these operas by the New England group. Some 41 pages of Bizet's original score, not previously performed in this country, were restored to the company's 1952 production of Carmen. But the search continues, and Miss Caldwell hopes to locate sixteen pages known to be missing from the first scene of the first act, believed to be an aria for Morales, and nine more pages in the same act in which the chorus of cavaliers tries to woo the cigarette girls on their return to the factory.

In Faust, research has indicated the original existence of a duet for Valentin and Marguerite and a trio in the prologue in which Faust's young students sing of their eagerness to go to war and to make love. The New Englanders feel that the omission of this trio in standard productions greatly weakens the motivation for Faust's willingness to bargain with the devil, particularly since Faust, in his own soliloquy, refers to his envy of young men who can both fight and woo.

## Ducal Indiscretion

As for Rigoletto, Verdi's letters make frequent mention of a love duet between Gilda and the Duke that was supposed to occur when the jester's daughter is first brought to the palace. This scene apparently was censored on moral grounds in performances during the composer's lifetime, and he went on record as greatly regretting the omission.

Opera probably receives more cavalier treatment at the hands of producers and performers than any other form of musical composition. Some have been so flagrant-

ly cut, transposed and revised over the years that it is all but impossible to determine exactly what they were like in their original form. How much the results of the New England Opera Theatre's scouting will contribute to subsequent productions of the operas in question remains to be seen. But the effort itself is worthy of commendation. It is good to know that there are people around with sufficient interest to preserve masterworks in their original form and who are busy doing something about it.

## Bogy

Those two high C's dubbed into the Flagstad recording of Tristan und Isolde by Elizabeth Schwarzkopf are difficult to detect if you do not know they are there, and they certainly do no violence to the musical validity of the recording. But they seem to have raised a considerable furor in some quarters on ethical grounds.

In case this small contretemps has not come to your attention, let me recall that His Masters Voice, the British affiliate of RCA Victor, issued a complete recording of Tristan a few months ago in which Kirsten Flagstad sang Isolde. Made in London, the recording is a particularly fine one, and Mme. Flagstad seems to sing her famous role as beautifully as ever. However, for reasons so far undisclosed, she decided not to sing the two high C's that occur in the first part of the second-act Liebesnacht music; with the approval of the conductor, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Miss Schwarzkopf was then called in to sing them.

So, in a kind of vocal relay race, Mme. Flagstad sings all of the notes up to the C's, where Miss Schwarzkopf deftly takes over. Two rehearsals are said to have been required to make the thing come off smoothly.

The participants in this little deception clearly were motivated only by a desire to achieve the best possible musical performance, and the only violation of ethics I can perceive is the fact that no public notice was given and that the records themselves and the accompanying literature make no mention of Miss Schwarzkopf's participation. Some purists are now demanding that Mme. Flag-

stad rerecord the whole performance and sing the C's herself, for better or for worse. This would seem to me to be carrying things a bit too far, and I doubt that the recording company would even consider such spectacular amends. I do think, however, that all further releases of the records should give the facts of the matter and that every effort should be made to inform people who already have the records in their possession.

Just why Mme. Flagstad was impelled to so drastic a step as bringing in a pinch-hitter for the two C's remains a mystery. Much of Isolde's music lies in the same vicinity, and the famed Wagnerian soprano seemed to experience no particular difficulty with other tones in her top register. However, the very term, "high C", sometimes has a peculiar psychological effect on the singer just as it does on the lay public. It is a kind of magic symbol—a goal and a coveted achievement. But as the singer's powers wane, it is likely to turn into a bogy of which she can become mortally afraid. If the psychological block could be removed and if, somehow, the singer could be made unaware that the tone in question is the dread high C, she probably would be able, in most cases, to sing it as easily as B or B flat. In any event, Mme. Flagstad is not the first soprano to be frightened beyond reason by that imperious little note two lines above the staff, nor will she be the last.

## Rubinstein vs Rubinstein

May L. Etts has relayed to me a clipping from the Louisville Times announcing a concert by Artur Rubinstein, which, among other things, informs the reader that "Rubinstein as a composer is perhaps best known for the Melody in F, a simple lyric work".

One of the crosses Mr. Rubinstein long has had to bear is the widespread confusion between himself and his illustrious predecessor, Anton Rubinstein; and inevitably, of course, he is credited with, or accused of (depending on what you think of the piece), composing the ubiquitous Melody in F. I suggest that Mr. Rubinstein confuse the issue completely and for all time by writing a Melody in F of his own. Then nobody

will know what Melody in F or what Rubinstein anybody is talking about, and the noted pianist will have had his just revenge.

## For the Record—

The Stockholm Royal Opera is reported recently to have cancelled the second performance of Kurt Atterberg's new opera, Hårvard's Homecoming, when the box office reported it had sold only three tickets.

Lunching in a Tel-Aviv hotel, Shura Cherkassky was asked by the waiter for his name and passport number, as demanded of all tourists getting special rations. When the pianist came to pay his check he was amused to find himself listed as "Tchaikovsky".

On their flight to Hawaii, via Pan-American Airways, the De Paur choir were delightfully surprised to be presented with a huge decorated cake inscribed "PAA Welcomes Aboard de Paur Infantry Chorus".

"In pink frosting, too!" writes Leonard de Paur.

Another cake, presumably with pink frosting too, was presented to Dimitri Mitropoulos, musical director of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, on the occasion of his 58th birthday during the orchestra's regular rehearsal on Feb. 18. This may or may not have been a surprise to the conductor, but he certainly got a surprise when he gave the downbeat for a new work the orchestra was to rehearse and a fugue on Happy Birthday came out.

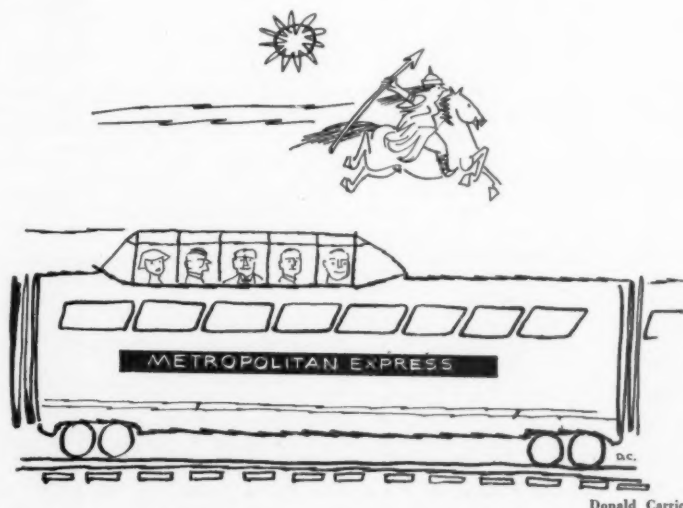
The members of the orchestra had gotten together secretly with composer Morton Gould to compose the Birthday Fugue, which was received with mixed amazement and appreciation by Mr. Mitropoulos. "I want to tell you how touched I am," he said, "and I hope you will be able to play it many times for me."

On hand to extend greetings were Floyd G. Blair, president of the Philharmonic-Symphony Society; David M. Keyser, secretary; Bruno Zirato, manager of the orchestra; Antal Dorati, who succeeded Mr. Mitropoulos as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony; Guido Cantelli, one of the Philharmonic's guest conductors; and Mr. Gould.

Both Paul Hindemith and Leo Blech, former Berlin State Opera conductor, have now been credited with the quip anent Gottfried von Einem's opera, Der Prozess: "Nicht von Einem, sondern von Vielen" ("Not by one but by many").

Radio station WFUV, Fordham University, announces a series of broadcast lectures by Dean Ekertsen commemorating the 301st anniversary of the birth of Arcangelo Corelli on Feb. 12.

Somebody caught napping on Feb. 12 last year?



OPERA TOURING TIME-BEGINS

Donald Carrick

*Mephisto*

# MUSICAL AMERICA

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## Toscanini Bids Farewell To Orchestra

WHEN Arturo Toscanini stepped from the podium at the broadcast of the NBC Symphony on April 4, 1954, his retirement became official. He preferred to have his resignation kept secret until after the concert, so that the audience would concentrate on the music and not turn the occasion into a demonstration for him. This was a gesture characteristic of a man whose reverence for great art has been unswerving during the 68 years of his fabulous career as a conductor. Of course, Maestro Toscanini may return for guest engagements later, and we can only hope that he will soon find occasion to do so, but this step means that he no longer feels it advisable to assume the full burdens of an extended season. The orchestra he has led so incomparably for seventeen years will miss him as keenly as those who have enjoyed their magnificent performances.

It will be a long time before the musical world realizes that Toscanini has retired. He is a giant among musicians and a legend among people of all walks of life throughout the world. He was already one of the greatest conductors of his age when many of us were born, and he has become a fixed star in the firmament of art. Year after year, his interpretations of the symphonic repertoire, of opera, of great choral works have been poured forth with prodigal energy and selfless industry. Age has not touched him, nor has time been able to cool his fires. His interpretation of Beethoven's Missa Solemnis, with the NBC Symphony in Carnegie Hall, on March 28, 1953, which was happily recorded for posterity a few days later, was just as electrifying as his interpretation of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony must have been at his first symphonic concert in the United States, on April 13, 1913, in the Metropolitan Opera House, forty years earlier.

TOSCANINI has remained so young in spirit, so much a part of the present, that we tend to forget that he is also an historic figure. From that evening on June 25, 1886, in Rio de Janeiro when he made his dramatic and unexpected debut as a conductor, until April 4, 1954, his career has been studded with memorable achievements and events of lasting significance. Many of the operas that seem like stand-bys of the repertoire today actually had their world premieres under Toscanini. He conducted the first performance anywhere of Paggiacci, at the Teatro Dal Verme in Milan, on May 21, 1892. Again, it was Toscanini who conducted the first performance of La Bohème, at the Teatro Regio in Turin, on Feb. 1, 1896. Fourteen years later, he introduced Puccini's The Girl of the Golden West, at the Metropolitan Opera in New York, on Dec. 10, 1910. Equally distinguished were his achievements as a Wagnerian interpreter. In 1895, he conducted the first performance in Italy of Götterdämmerung, and in 1899 the first Italian performance of Siegfried.

We in the United States have been fortunate in having Toscanini with us most of the time since 1908, when he came to the Metropolitan Opera to make his memorable American debut, as conductor of Verdi's Aida, on a Metropolitan opening night, Nov. 16, 1908. From then until 1915 he made history at the opera house. It was in 1926 that he became guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and

in 1928 that he took the position of conductor of the newly-amalgamated New York Philharmonic-Symphony, which he held until 1936. On Christmas Night, 1937, Toscanini conducted his first concert with the new NBC Symphony, which he was to lead so gloriously for the next seventeen years.

Whether or not we hear him conduct again, Toscanini can never retire from the hearts and from the memories of those who have been enkindled by his art throughout their lives, as most of us have been.

## Letters to the Editor

### Kathleen Ferrier Memorials

I have seen nothing in your columns about the two funds which have been established as a memorial to the late great contralto, Kathleen Ferrier, and, therefore, I should like to request that you print the following information as I am sure there are many people who would like to contribute if they knew where to send donations.

Under the administration of the Royal Philharmonic Society and a board of trustees comprised of Sir John Barbirolli, Hamish Hamilton, Roy Henderson, Gerald Moore, and Sir Malcolm Sargent, a fund called the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Scholarship has been set up to finance the award of scholarships to British-born singers. Contributions may be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Royal Philharmonic Society, 48 Gloucester Place, London W. 1, England. There is also the Kathleen Ferrier Cancer Research Fund sponsored by the University College Hospital, Gower Street, London W. C. 1, England, where Miss Ferrier was a patient for so many months.

LAURA W. COOPER  
Van Nuys, Calif.

I am carrying out an intention, which I had mentioned to the late and beloved Kathleen Ferrier when she was still happily with us, of writing a book about her life and wonderful career. It is intended to be simply an intimate and reverent study of a great and gracious personality and artist, based partly on personal knowledge and with the co-operation of some of her closest friends. This letter is an appeal to any who may have cuttings (i. e., clippings), letters, etc., to lend them for the purpose. They will be carefully preserved and returned.

CHARLES RIGBY  
16 Queen's Road,  
Sale, Manchester, England



## On The Front Cover

ELEANOR  
STEBER

SINCE she made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1940, Eleanor Steber has been one of the busiest sopranos with the company. She has sung approximately two dozen leading roles there, and will undoubtedly be heard in some new ones next season. Besides her full schedule at the Metropolitan, the soprano from Wheeling, W. Va., has appeared with other American companies, most recently in Pittsburgh, as Elsa in Lohengrin, and in Philadelphia, as Tosca. This summer she will return to Europe to sing at such major undertakings as the Florence May Festival. Last summer she sang in Vienna and Bayreuth, among other cities. Her recent engagements as soloist with orchestra have continued one side of her career, which has included singing with all the top-ranking orchestras of the country, many times under such conductors as Bruno Walter, Arturo Toscanini, the late Serge Koussevitzky, Dimitri Mitropoulos, and Eugene Ormandy. As a recitalist and radio artist she is equally well known, and among her many Columbia recordings are leading soprano roles in three complete operas—Madama Butterfly, Faust, and Così Fan Tutte. (Photography by Halsman, New York, N. Y.)



# Orchestras in New York

(Continued from page 6)

## Heifetz Is Soloist With Philharmonic-Symphony

New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Guido Cantelli conducting. Jascha Heifetz, violinist. Carnegie Hall, March 11:

Concerto in A, for Strings and Cembalo (F. XI, No. 4).....Vivaldi  
Concerto for Violin and String Orchestra in A minor.....Bach  
Divertimento No. 15, in B flat major, K. 287.....Mozart  
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in E minor.....Mendelssohn

An unusually interesting concert presented music of the pre-classic, classical, and romantic periods that was in all cases beguiling to the ear. The first half, given with a reduced orchestra, opened with the first performance by the society of a Vivaldi concerto grosso, one of many this master composed and a work of much appeal, which Mr. Cantelli subjected to a careful reading. More infectious



Jascha Heifetz

was his later traversal of the buoyant and richly melodious Mozart Divertimento, which had a rhythmically vital and plastically conceived interpretation.

The appeal of Jascha Heifetz as a soloist had attracted a capacity audience. The combination of the lyrical perfectionist among violinists and a conductor whose particular forte is the singing tone of his orchestra offered many interesting facets. The slow movement of the Bach concerto had a rare beauty of solo treatment. The violinist's poised projection was perhaps subordinated too much to the general instrumental texture to achieve ideal spontaneity in a few passages.

The Mendelssohn was a highly rewarding experience, especially in its tonal sheen. Soloist and orchestra took the final measures of the first movement a bit impetuously, but the Andante provided moments of the highest musical effulgence, and in the closing movement the ensemble seconded with delicacy and a particularly golden charm the immaculate statement of the solo part.

—R. M. K.

## Kostelanetz Presents Third Program with Philharmonic

New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Andre Kostelanetz conducting. Carnegie Hall, March 13:

Overture to The Marriage of Figaro.....Mozart  
Classical Symphony.....Prokofiev  
Suite from The Firebird.....Stravinsky  
Romeo and Juliet.....Tchaikovsky  
An American in Paris.....Gershwin

The last of three concerts under Mr. Kostelanetz' baton found an informal audience of excitable enthusiasm and the house again virtually sold out. The program held fare of familiar vintage, nicely contrasted, which gave the conductor an opportunity for the large-scale effects and romantic sonorities in which he is adept. The Prokofiev, with a rather lighter and rhythmically precise treatment, would have had more elegance and vivacity, and the final Molto vivace was over-speeded, but the general spirit of the work was conveyed.

In The Firebird music, Mr. Kostelanetz succeeded in weaving the slum-

brous spell of the Berceuse effectively; Kastchi's dance thundered with a suggestion of the cataclysmic. The conductor did not spare the percussion section in the wars of the Montagues and Capulets during the Tchaikovsky masterpiece; he attained true expressive power in the final threnody of this work. In Gershwin's score his treatment was boldly conceived and original.

—R. M. K.

## Two Choral Works Led By Toscanini

For the NBC Symphony program broadcast from Carnegie Hall on March 14, Arturo Toscanini conducted Vivaldi's D minor Concerto Grosso and two choral works, Verdi's Te Deum and the Prologue to Boito's Mefistofele. The Robert Shaw Chorale, the Columbus Boychoir, and Nicola Moscona, bass, were the assisting artists.

The Te Deum, one of the four sacred pieces written by Verdi towards the end of his life, is at once dramatic in structure, extraordinarily subtle in its melodies and harmonies—a work comparable in its mature skill and wisdom to Otello and Falstaff. In spite of searing climaxes, the total effect is one of profound spiritual devotion.

The Prologue to Mefistofele, on the other hand, is dramatic without any subtlety whatsoever. Hand in hand with some original ideas goes considerable tediousness—an affliction of so many Italian works with a philosophical or mystical cast. However, if a work has validity because it becomes effective when given the right kind of performance, then the Boito prologue is just such a one; for Mr. Toscanini conducted the music with such incredible tension and incandescence, building it slowly and inexorably to a resounding climax, that the audience was brought cheering to its feet.

The Te Deum, which had its premiere under Mr. Toscanini in 1898, was equally unearthly in effect. Intrinsically far superior to the Boito score, it poses its own problems of communication in the very subtleties that make it so beautiful, but the



Nicola Moscona

conductor solved them in his own great, time-honored way.

Not the least of the contributions to the magnificence of the concert were the singing of the Robert Shaw Chorale, which could float exquisite high pianissimos of perfect clarity or produce tremendous fortes of great tonal richness, and the handsome, completely understood performance by Mr. Moscona of Mefistofele's music.

—R. A. E.

## Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble 2nd Street YMHA, March 14

The last of the New York Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble's three concerts brought an admirable novelty, Richard Donovan's Quartet for Woodwinds, another contemporary piece by Milhaud, and three classics, all unacknowledged. The program was a model of balance, and the evening was musically rewarding from every point of view.

Donovan's quartet, although it reveals the impact of Hindemith in its style and method, is an original work



Edward Osers

At the March 20 concert of the National Association for American Composers and Conductors were, from the left, Alfred Knopf, vice-president of Local 802, AFM; Holon Matthews, composer; Elizabeth Gould, composer-pianist; Robert Russell Bennett, NAACC president; Thomas Scherman, conductor of the Little Orchestra; Ellabelle Davis, soprano; and G. E. Deakin, ASCAP representative

of rare eloquence. Each of its four compact movements is well knit and constantly absorbing both in form and content. It was well played by John Wummer, flute; Englebert Brenner, oboe; Stanley Drucker, clarinet; and Manuel Ziegler, bassoon. Milhaud's Sonatine à Trois, for violin, viola, and cello, was deftly performed by Michael de Stefano, Raymond Sabinsky, and Nathan Stutch. The first two movements are drearily neat and routine, but the third one is rhythmically piquant and extremely brilliant in its figurings.

Mr. Drucker, Mr. Brenner, and Mr. Ziegler opened the concert with an arrangement by F. Oubradous of a three-voice Prelude and Fugue by Bach. Leonid Hambro, pianist; Milton Forst, cellist; and Mr. Drucker played Beethoven's rarely-heard Trio, Op. 11. The evening ended with a memorable performance of the Mendelssohn Octet, conducted with masterly taste and intensity by Dimitri Mitropoulos. The performers were Leon Rudin, William Nowinski, Mr. de Stefano, and Bjorn Andreasson, violins; Leonard Davis and Godfrey Layefsky, violas; and Heinrich Joachim and George Feher, cellos. It was the best performance of the Octet I have ever heard.

—R. S.

## Firkusny Appears With Philadelphia Orchestra

Philadelphia Orchestra, Eugene Ormandy, conductor. Rudolf Firkusny, pianist. Carnegie Hall, March 16:

Symphony in D minor.....Franck  
Armenian Suite.....Yardumian  
(First New York performance)  
Piano Concerto No. 5.....Beethoven

Two tried and true old favorites and one delightful new work were presented in such a way in this concert that the old seemed ever new while the new came with an easy and refreshing familiarity.

Richard Yardumian's Armenian Suite, heard here for the first time, is based on authentic Armenian folk songs and dancers. The Philadelphia-born composer of Armenian descent has made no attempt to develop or modernize these charming melodies beyond clothing them in brilliant and appropriate orchestral colors, nor do his harmonizations, simple and tasteful, vitiate the oriental character of the melodies. One of the most appealing of its seven sections is the second, entitled Song. Scored for woodwinds, trumpet, horns, timpani and violins, it is based on a plaintive descending five-note figure banded about among the woodwinds while the other instruments furnish an effective tambourine-like and drone bass accompaniment. The Suite scored a hit with the audience, and Mr. Yardumian was recalled again and again to the stage after its superb performance.

Mr. Ormandy, taking it at a more leisurely pace than is customary, brought out details of phrasing and stressed inner voices in the Franck Symphony that are usually overlooked. He kept the symphony aglow

with orchestral colors and gave the final movement with a majestic, rather than a jazzy, swing.

Yet, what lingered in the mind long after the concert was ended was the Beethoven Concerto played with such poetry, beauty of tone, and imagination by Rudolf Firkusny. His approach, lacking neither brilliancy nor fire, was predominantly a lyrical one, and as such it was more in the nature of chamber music than virtuoso display.

—R. K.

## Cantelli Conducts Minor Novelties by Busoni

New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Guido Cantelli conducting. Carnegie Hall, March 18:

Symphony in D major.....Cherubini  
Death and Transfiguration.....Strauss  
Berceuse Elégiaque.....Busoni  
Dance-Waltz for Orchestra, Op. 53.....Busoni  
Bolero.....Ravel

This program of unusual make-up included works of less than first-rank masters, led with considerable force and vivacity by Mr. Cantelli. The list might have been designed to show his more dynamic aspects as a conductor. The Cherubini is a correctly constructed symphony, the only one by a composer highly esteemed in his day for his operas. It is an example of the symphony à la Haydn, though with some more quasi-romantic accents—the latter much intensified in Mr. Cantelli's large-scaled and at times almost Beethovenian reading.

The Strauss work had a searching interpretation, if one very deliberately paced and not always ideally fused in its structural elements. There were moments when the dying man's struggles approached an almost Tchaikovsky pitch of excitement; the closing Moderato was sung with full-throated lyricism.

The second half introduced to the Society's repertoire two shorter works of Busoni—the poignant Berceuse Elégiaque, written in memory of the composer's parents, and a lugubriously colored Dance-Waltz for Orchestra, inspired by Johann Strauss, said to be a study for certain passages in the opera Doktor Faust. These are sincere but not highly inspired pieces so far as musical invention goes, though ably orchestrated. The concert's finale was a highly surcharged and even exaggeratedly brutal reading of Ravel's Bolero, in which the conductor revealed all of his rhythmic sense, plus some unsuspected choreographic accomplishments of his own.

—R. M. K.

## Little Orchestra in NAACC Program

For its second annual concert, the National Association for American Composers and Conductors presented the Little Orchestra Society, conducted by Thomas Scherman, in a program in Town Hall, March 20 at 5:30. NAACC had the co-operation of ASCAP, the Music Performer's

(Continued on page 18)

## Giannini's Taming of the Shrew Has First Video Production by NBC-TV



Singers in a scene from Vittorio Giannini's opera *The Taming of the Shrew*, as produced by the NBC-TV Opera. From the left, John Raftt, Leon Lishner, Susan Yager, Sonia Stollin, John Alexander, and Albert Wilson

By CHRISTIE BARTER

WITH the third Opera Theatre presentation in color, Vittorio Giannini's *The Taming of the Shrew*, the people at NBC effectively demonstrated the coming of age of its new compatible system. Although the great majority of the nation's viewers on March 13 watched this show in black and white, the few who had access to a color receiver witnessed a glorious spectacle. The Giannini opera, based on the Shakespeare play, furnished NBC's designers William Molyneux and John Boxer with a rare opportunity to recreate an appropriately Veronese setting that could be seen and appreciated by at least a segment of their audience. It was an opportunity that they did not let pass. The brilliant contrasts and subtle shadings of their respective scenery and costumes were explored with stunning effect by the cameras, which themselves were used with imagination and taste throughout.

The *Taming of the Shrew* received its first performance on Jan. 31, 1953, by the Cincinnati Symphony under Thor Johnson, with local artists making up the cast, and was subsequently given by an amateur group in Charlotte, N. C. The NBC presentation, which cut only twenty-odd minutes from the complete score, brought it to television for the first time and dressed it in its first large-scale production. Heading the cast were John Raftt as Petruchio, Susan Yager as Kate, Sonia Stollin as Bianca, John Alexander as Lucentio, Donald Gramm as Hortensio, and Leon Lishner as the father of the two girls, Baptista. The opera was directed by John Bloch, and Peter Herman Adler conducted. Samuel Chotzinoff, the network's general music director, was the producer.

As co-author with Dorothy Fee of his own libretto, Mr. Giannini has drawn heavily on the Shakespeare text, and where he has felt the need to supplement his material, he has used passages from *Romeo and Juliet* and the sonnets. Thus, where he did not follow the original text slavishly, he adhered closely enough to it so that it dictated, perhaps, the form of the operatic setting. Giannini's *Shrew* is through-composed; it can be said to contain arias of a traditional nature only at such times as Shakespeare himself allowed his characters to speak at length.

The musical setting is the work of a craftsman who understands thor-

oughly the problems of the singer, who knows how to show consideration for the singer without compromising his own musical ideas, and who above all can write a pleasing lyric phrase. The composer's handling of the orchestra is at times highly original and refreshing; at other times it varies between mere cuteness and the sort of banality practiced for the most part in Hollywood. What one might object to in particular was a heaviness in the orchestration, a thickness of texture, that never allowed the work to get very far off the ground. While not wholly disastrous, Giannini's heavy-handed approach added needless weight to what should have been some of the work's blithely comic scenes. It is sad to report that in fact this *Shrew* was not terribly funny.

Whether this essential lack of humor was due to a failing in the production or in the work itself—or to the listener's growing exhaustion during an uninterrupted hour and a half of playing time—would be hard to tell. Certainly Mr. Bloch's staging was skillful and, though short on business, was stylistically informed and nicely paced. The singers, too, went about their chores in a light-hearted manner, and with considerable competence.

As Petruchio, John Raftt cut a striking figure, brash and domineering in his treatment of the recalcitrant

### THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

Opera in three acts by Vittorio Giannini. Libretto by Vittorio Giannini and Dorothy Fee. Conducted by Peter Herman Adler. Staged by John Bloch. Settings by William Molyneux. Costumes by John Boxer. Assistant conductor, Felix Popper. Technical director, Milton Kitchen. Audio director, George Voutsas. Color consultant, Richard Day. Producer, Samuel Chotzinoff. Associate producer, Charles Polachek. Presented on NBC-TV, March 13:

#### CAST:

Petruchio ..... John Raftt  
Kate ..... Susan Yager  
Bianca ..... Sonia Stollin  
Lucentio ..... John Alexander  
Hortensio ..... Donald Gramm  
Baptista ..... Leon Lishner  
Gremio ..... Emile Renan  
Biondello ..... Robert Holland  
Grumio ..... Karl Brock  
Tranio ..... Paul Ukena  
Vincentio ..... Albert Wilcox  
Tailor ..... Charles Kuestner  
Hairdresser ..... Harry S. Miller  
Hairdresser's assistant, Harry Ames  
Servant ..... Charles Senna

Kate, yet entirely sympathetic beneath it all. Susan Yager's Kate was possibly too much of a shrew to begin with and more whimpering than tender in her eventual capitulation, but she conveyed the spirit of the role admirably. Miss Stollin made a warmly affecting Bianca, and her suitors, played by Messrs. Alexander (Lucentio), Gramm (Hortensio), and

Robert Holland (Gremio), were characteristically ardent. Mr. Lishner's playing of Baptista was rather straight but persuasive.

These and the singers in supporting roles made uniformly fine contributions to a vocally distinguished production. Mr. Adler is to be congratulated for his expert co-ordination of the musical end of things.

## Weill's Threepenny Opera Presented In New English Version by Blitzstein

By ROBERT SABIN

THOSE who know Kurt Weill's and Bert Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* (*Die Dreigroschenoper*) only by the legends it has created should hasten to hear the production with book and lyrics in English by Marc Blitzstein that opened at the Theatre De Lys in Greenwich Village on March 10.

Mr. Blitzstein originally transferred the action to New York in the 1890s, and in this version his adaptation had its premiere in concert form at the Brandeis University Festival in 1952; now the opera takes place in London at the turn of the century. In either case Mr. Blitzstein has preserved the biting satire of Brecht's libretto to an astonishing degree, considering the virtually untranslatable flavor of the German original.

The presence of Weill's widow, the incomparable Lotte Lenya, in the cast, in the role of Jenny, which she created at the Berlin premiere in 1928, sets the tone of the whole performance and gives the other members of the company an invaluable model for the style. Weill's score, perhaps the finest thing he ever wrote, remains intact. The costumes are cleverly designed; the scenery is ingeniously adapted to the tiny proportions of the stage; and the production has been on the whole intelligently directed. In short, no one who is interested in the history of the modern musical theatre since World War I can afford to miss this revival.

The accent in this newest production of *The Threepenny Opera* is on youth, freshness, and humor. Some of the young singing actors and actresses did not vouchsafe sufficient maturity of temperament and psychological insight to create full-bodied, convincing characters, but even those who were a bit superficial worked so hard that one liked them.

Brecht and Weill created a gallery of some of the most fascinating rascallions ever put upon a stage. What they were aiming at is beautifully exemplified in the singing and acting of Miss Lenya. She presents us with a figure from Toulouse-Lautrec, sinister, evil, ruthless, and yet full of humor and somehow likeable. The *Threepenny Opera* does not merely poke fun at social shams and hypocrisy; it abounds in stimulating paradoxes of human character. When Miss Lenya sings *Pirate Jenny*, or the *Solomon Song*, we feel a delicious flavor of mingled irony, pity, contempt, and profound humanity in the text and music.

Most successful of the other artists in the cast were Charlotte Rae, as Mrs. Peachum; Leon Lishner, as Mr. Peachum; Beatrice Arthur, as Lucy Brown; and Gerald Price, as the Streetsinger. Miss Rae did not treat her role in the style of a period piece, but she acted with such hilarious abandon that her Mrs. Peachum was irresistible. Mr. Lishner was a more believably Victorian figure (Brecht and Weill changed the setting of *The Beggar's Opera*, which was their model, from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century). At times, he seemed to have stepped from the pages of Dickens. Miss Arthur gave a portrait of Lucy that was Hogarthian in its vigor and truthfulness of

detail. She made the girl a real baggage, yet somehow appealing in her loyalty to Macheath. Mr. Price was excellent in appearance and in the casual manner in which he set the performance in motion with his introductory song and pantomime.

Scott Merrill and Jo Sullivan, as Macheath and his young bride, Polly Peachum, did not capture the overtones of viciousness and cynicism that would have made their impersonations full-dimensional. But in a light vein, dramatically and vocally, they gave effective performances. The members of Macheath's gang were a picturesque crew of ruffians; and the whores in the brothel in Wapping were extremely decorative and not too refined. At all times the dialogue and



Henry Easton  
Lotte Lenya as Jenny

action were kept subordinate to the musical moods and themes, so that the solos and ensembles drew each episode into focus.

Warmest praise should go to the orchestra, which was composed of Samuel Matlowsky, equally able as conductor and pianist; Herbert Tishman and Wally Wagner, clarinets; Bernard Ross and Harry Jenkins, trumpets; Elliot Philips, trombone; Stan Koor, timpani and percussion; and Ralph Colicchio, banjo.

### THE THREEPENNY OPERA

Opera in three acts, by Kurt Weill. Original German text by Bert Brecht. English adaptation of book and lyrics by Marc Blitzstein. Conducted by Samuel Matlowsky. Production staged by Carmen Capalbo. Settings by William Pitkin. Costumes by Bolasni. Theatre De Lys, March 10, 1954:

#### CAST

Streetsinger ..... Gerald Price  
Jenny ..... Lotte Lenya  
Mr. J. J. Peachum ..... Leon Lishner  
Mrs. Peachum ..... Charlotte Rae  
Filch ..... William Duell  
Macheath (Mack the Knife) ..... Scott Merrill  
Polly Peachum ..... Jo Sullivan  
Ready money Matt ..... John Astin  
Crookfinger Jake ..... Joseph Beruh  
Bob the Saw ..... Bernard Bogin  
Walt Dreary ..... Paul Dooley  
Reverend Kimball ..... Donald Elson  
Tiger Brown ..... George Tyne  
Betty ..... Marcella Markham  
Molly ..... Marion Selee  
Dolly ..... Gerriane Raphael  
Coaxer ..... Gloria Sokol  
Smith, the Warden ..... Chuck Smith  
Lucy Brown ..... Beatrice Arthur  
1st Constable ..... Stan Schneider  
2nd Constable ..... Miles Dickson  
Messenger ..... William Duell



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AMERICA



Salvatore Baccaloni takes off for Stockholm to appear at the Royal Opera in The Barber of Seville and L'Elisir d'Amore this month, before returning to the Metropolitan for its spring tour. J. J. Vincent, his manager, who arranged the bookings, is wishing him bon voyage

**W**HEN he returns from Europe this summer, **Andre Kostelanetz** will embark on a cross-country tour schedule, with fourteen concerts listed for Lewisohn Stadium, Robin Hood Dell, Cleveland, Hollywood Bowl, Grant Park, Red Rocks and Montreal.

**Bartlett and Robertson** are currently making a European tour, with concerts in Holland, Germany, Spain, and England. In Holland the duo-pianists celebrated their 25th anniversary as a successful team, playing to two sold-out houses at The Hague. Miss Bartlett was presented with a bouquet of Ethel Bartlett tulips.

**Blanche Thebom** will appear at the Vienna Festival this summer as soloist with the Vienna Philharmonic in the European premiere of Ernst Krenek's *Medea*. The Metropolitan Opera soprano sang the premiere of this work with the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Eugene Ormandy, last season.

A daughter, **Cecilia Ann**, was born last month to Mr. and Mrs. **Frederic Balazs**.

**Helen Traubel** has signed with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to sing in the studio's forthcoming film on the life of Sigmund Romberg, *Deep in My Heart*. She will make her movie debut co-starring with Jose Ferrer.

**Jean Carillon** accompanied by **Solon Al-berti**, shared a program with **Jeanne and Joanne Nettleton** at the Park Avenue Christian Church on April 12.

## Primrose

(Continued from page 10)

is not the only item in the viola literature. The repertory is not small, and it is growing all the time—thanks largely to the efforts of the best-known violist. Mr. Primrose has commissioned, or had written for him, an average of one new viola work a year, and if he has any burning dream it is to be able to leave the repertory even better than he found it. There is a good chance that he will. So far the most famous work fathered by him is Bela Bartok's *Viola Concerto*, left unfinished by the composer at his death in 1945 and completed by his close friend Tibor Serly. Mr. Primrose has performed the concerto fifty times, mostly abroad.

The violist made his debut in London in 1923. For five years, starting in 1930, he was the viola of the London String Quartet; a tour of theirs, as a matter of fact, was the occasion for his first visit to America. He returned to this country in 1937 to become first violist with the new NBC Symphony, an orchestra of virtuosos hand-picked for Arturo Toscanini. Again Mr. Primrose stayed put for five years. But then he branched out on his own, and since that time he has spent his seasons concertizing. He has appeared at all the principal music festivals, including that most dedicated festival of them all, the one under the aegis of Pablo Casals at Prades. The violist has

**Mischa Elman** sailed for Europe on March 31 on his fiftieth trans-Atlantic crossing. The violinist went directly to London for a concert at the Albert Hall, where he made his London debut in 1905. Before returning to the United States for a Lewisohn Stadium appearance on June 8, he will give concerts in Holland, Scandinavia, and Spain, as well as in Paris and Vienna.

**Jan Smeterlin** has agreed to make recordings of the *Chopin Nocturnes* for the Philips company in Holland next October. Until that time he will be traveling in the Pacific, fulfilling a schedule of 24 concerts in Australia and New Zealand and other concerts in Hong Kong, Singapore, and the major Indian cities. He will arrive in the United States for a three-month tour following the recording sessions in Holland.



Camera Hawaii

**Leonard Pennario**, left, in Hawaii for an appearance as soloist with the Honolulu Symphony in the Rachmaninoff C minor Piano Concerto, chats with **George Barati**, conductor of the orchestra

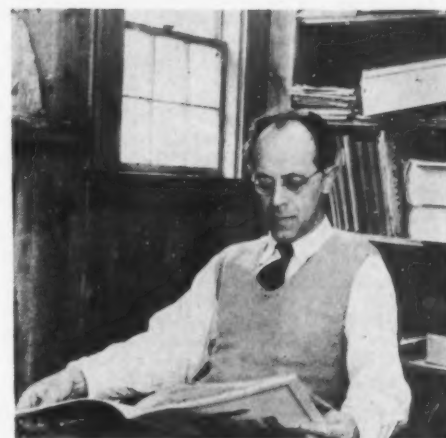
**Lucretia West** made her first American orchestral appearances with the Minneapolis Symphony under the direction of Antal Dorati, in Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, on April 11, and in Mahler's Second Symphony, on April 16. The young mezzo-soprano completed a tour of Austria, Italy, and Holland before rejoining the New York City Opera this spring. Next winter she will begin her European tour with a London recital. A BBC television appearance; engagements with the San Carlo Opera in Naples, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, and the Vienna Symphony; and other appearances will follow.

performed as far afield as Israel. "The energy of that young nation is wonderful," he said. "I'm very enthusiastic about Israel. I plan to go there again within the next year or so, and also to Germany; otherwise I'll remain in the United States. You should see what they're doing there—really making the wilderness blossom, and culturally no less than agriculturally. Israel has its creative problems, though, don't you know. In many ways they're similar to those of the United States. I mean the country has too rich a cultural mixture for its own good—at this stage of the game, at any rate. It's a melting pot, and its artists haven't quite found themselves yet. Too many cooks. But give them time; after all, as a nation they're only a half-dozen years old."

### Forbidden Amati

Mr. Primrose himself is nearing the half-century mark. He has not always been a violist; his first instrument was the violin. On the sly, however, the child would try his hand on the Amati viola of his father, who was librarian of Sir Thomas Beecham's London Philharmonic. He had been forbidden to touch the precious instrument, but already there must have been a touch of rebellious independence in his character. Time quickly forgave young William for his disobedience. It was the violinist Eugene Ysaye who suggested that the boy switch permanently to the viola; after that he was able to play the wonderful Amati openly. He is still playing it.

## Personalities in the News



Charles Leirne

**Rudolf Serkin**, studies a score in the library of his Vermont home

**Harold Kohon** returned recently from London, where he was heard in the local premiere of *Richard Arnell's Violin Concerto* with the Royal Philharmonic, the composer conducting.

The **Curtis String Quartet** has been named the recipient of the 1954 Medal of Achievement awarded by the Philadelphia Art Alliance. Its members—Jascha Brodsky, Louis Berman, Max Aronoff, and Orlando Cole—are all on the faculty of the New School of Music in Philadelphia. Mr. Aronoff is director of the school.

**Virginia Card** and **Harry Wayne** have just completed a tour of New York State, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. Miss Card is currently scheduled to sing *Adele* in a concert version of *Fledermaus* to open the Carnegie Pops series in New York on May 8. Her new opera-comique version of *Carmen* will be presented for four weeks at the Paper Mill Playhouse beginning May 25, and will be heard in the Kansas City *Starlight Operetta* series during the week of July 18.

**Richard Ellsasser** embarks on his third trans-continental tour of the season this month. The young organist will be heard in cities in Washington, Montana, Texas, Florida, Alabama, Massachusetts, and Canada, as well as in Washington, D. C.

**William Hughes** has served as accompanist in recent concerts to *Nadine Conner*, *Mattiwilda Dobbs*, *Mona Paulee*, *Blanche Thebom*, and *Theodor Uppman*.



Following their marriage in the Monastery of Ettal in the Bavarian Alps on Feb. 14, Peter Trump and his bride, the former Maria Traficante, soprano from the United States, are seen in Munich. The American bass-baritone is now singing in opera in Europe

April, 1954

## Records and Audio

### Angel Music

**BOCCHERINI:** String Quartet, A major, Op. 39, No. 3; String Quartet, E flat major, Op. 58, No. 3. *Quartetto Italiano*. (Angel 35062, \$5.95)\*\*\* **Mozart:** String Quartet, G major, K. 387; String Quartet, D minor, K. 421. *Quartetto Italiano*. (Angel 35063, \$5.95)\*\*\*

THE Quartetto Italiano was founded in 1945 by Paolo Borciani, Elisa Pegreffi, Piero Farulli, and Franco Rossi, then all in their early twenties. It has toured Europe, North Africa, and America, making its debut in the United States in 1951 with notable success. These recordings for Angel of two Boccherini and two Mozart quartets bring out very clearly the highly individual style and interpretative conceptions of these young Italian artists, who have dedicated their lives to chamber music. Like our Juilliard String Quartet, this ensemble brings an enterprising spirit of youth to its work.

By the time Luigi Boccherini composed his String Quartet in A major, published in 1787, he was a fully mature composer. Too many people associate him only with the over-elaborated nineteenth-century editions of his cello concertos and with one or two pretty little pieces like the "celebrated" Minuet. To them, this noble, eloquent, strongly-knit music will come as a delightful surprise. The E flat Quartet of 1799 is also imposing. It places Boccherini in the company of Haydn and Mozart as a true master of chamber music.

The Quartetto Italiano plays these works with endless vitality, beauty of tone, and perfect integration. Occasionally, the young artists make

unexpected contrasts between forte and piano, dramatic outbursts and lingering over phrases that are too romantic for my taste in eighteenth-century music, but they always do so with complete conviction. Nothing could be simpler and more moving than their performance of the Grave movement of Boccherini's A major Quartet. And in the finales of all the quartets, they keep a flowing rhythm.

One of the most admirable aspects of their playing is the temperamental as well as purely technical give-and-take. All four artists are equally intense, equally authoritative, yet never obtrusive where their musical role calls for subordination. Both of these albums are heartily recommended to chamber-music lovers in search of performers who have something of their own to say within the natural and desirable framework of traditional style.

—R. S.

### Complete Faust

**GOUNOD:** Faust. *Victoria De Los Angeles, Marguerite; Martha Angelici, Siebel; Solange Michel, Margherita; Nicolai Gedda, Faust; Boris Christoff, Mephistopheles; Jean Borthayre, Valentin; Robert Jeanette, Wagner. Chorus and orchestra of the Paris Opéra, André Cluytens conducting.* (Victor LM 6400, \$22.88)\*\*\*

THIS first complete recording of Faust contains both Valentin's air, Avant de quitter, and the Walpurgis Night music. Recorded in Paris last spring, it brings together a carefully selected group of singers with reputations already established in their respective roles and a conductor who understands the French national theatre traditions of this quintessential fixture of the Paris Opéra.

Of the principals, only Miss De Los Angeles is well known in this

country, and the very fact of our close acquaintance with the supreme artistry of the Spanish soprano may tend to make us more critical of her performance here than of the performances of others in the cast. Her King of Thule, Jewel Song and other numbers are beautifully sung by ordinary standards, but when we know that the voice of De Los Angeles is in question, we look for more nearly perfect execution, more luminosity of tone and more enchantment of style than are in evidence on these disks.

Mr. Christoff, whom we know only on records still, continues to tantalize as probably one of the great bass-baritones of our time—better in the higher reaches, perhaps, than in the lowest—in his Calf of Gold aria and elsewhere. Mr. Gedda sings the title role in true lyrical style without strain or tension, yet with sufficient power to be truly impressive. The Valentin of Mr. Borthayre is sufficiently expressive and well enough sung to make the inclusion of his first-act aria well worth the trouble; and Miss Angelici delivers her Flower Song with a voice that is sweet, clear and deftly managed.

Regarding the recording itself, our engineer's note says, "orchestra superb; voices not quite so well recorded". This evaluation might be expanded to the extent of saying that, in the vocal department, it is less the solo singing than the choral that will be found wanting. The chorus frequently sounds distant and muffled.

—R. E.

### Dvorak and Grieg Songs

**DVORAK:** Gypsy Songs, Op. 55; Love Songs, Op. 83 (Nos. 1, 2, 3, 6). **GRIEG:** Eight songs. *Dorothy Warenskold, soprano; Concert Arts Orchestra, George Greeley conducting* (Capitol P 8247, \$5.70)\*\*\*

POSSESSOR of one of the loveliest lyric voices today, Miss Warenskold makes her disk debut in a choice selection of songs, most of them unfortunately too rarely performed. The Grieg songs in this collection include Solvejg's Song, On St. John's Eve, Tides of Spring, I Love Thee, A Dream, Thanks for Thy Advice, A Swan, and Eros. The young American soprano's gleaming tones and admirable musicianship are exceptionally effective here, and she brings a coolly exquisite sentiment to them. The four Love Songs of Dvorak—Death Seem to Many Men the Goal; I Walk So Softly; In Deepest Forest Shades; and Oh, Could Our Love But Lead Us—more warmly sung, emerge with their full lyric stature. More temperament and abandon would have improved the performances of the Gypsy Songs, but the familiar Songs My Mother Taught Me sounds as pretty as anything on the record. Miss Warenskold sings in English, her diction being notable for its clarity, and the supporting orchestra plays well.

—R. A. E.

### Witty Cimarosa

**CIMAROSA:** Il Maestro di Cappella (The Conductor). *Carmelo Maugeri, bass. Orchestra da Camera di Milano, Ennio Gerelli, conductor.* Overture and Excerpts from Il Matrimonio Segreto (The Secret Marriage). *Elda Ribetti (Carolina); Amilcare Blaffard (Pao-lino); Orchestra da Camera di Milano, Ennio Gerelli, conductor.* (Vox PL 8450, \$5.95)\*\*\*

CIMAROSA'S Il Maestro di Cappella not only pokes fun at Alessandro Scarlatti but offers a priceless burlesque of an orchestral conductor demonstrating to his players. Anyone who has ever sat through a rehearsal by one of our celebrated maestros will savor the delicious performance of Mr. Maugeri, who hits off the weird vocalization of conductors to a "T". This little work also

### KEY TO MECHANICAL RATINGS

- \*\*\*\*The very best; wide frequency range, good balance, clarity and separation of sounds, no distortion, minimum surface or tape noise.
- \*\*\* Free from all obvious faults, differing only slightly from above.
- \*\* Average.
- \* Markedly impaired. Includes dubbings from 78-rpm disks, where musical virtues are expected to compensate for technical deficiencies.

illustrates the various choirs of the orchestra and effects of orchestration in a way that anticipates Peter and the Wolf, and the Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra by almost 200 years. The "stil sublime" of the classic aria as developed by Scarlatti is amusingly satirized, and there are many sly digs, such as the conductor's remark about the horns: "This instrument is not for me."

Miss Ribetti and Mr. Blaffard sing the arias and duets from Il Matrimonio Segreto adequately, if with no special beauty or finish. The orchestra plays brightly under Mr. Gerelli, especially in Il Maestro di Cappella. This recording makes one hungry for more Cimarosa. Let us hope that Vox will continue its good work with this witty composer.

—R. S.

### Gilels in Disk Debut

**LISZT:** Piano Concerto No. 1, E flat major. **SAINT-SAËNS:** Piano Concerto No. 2, G minor. *Emil Gilels, pianist; State Orchestra of the USSR, Kiril Kondrashin conducting.* (Vanguard VRS 6015, \$5.95)\*\*\*

WORD has gone around the international musical grapevine that Emil Gilels is an outstanding pianist. This young Russian artist has won international contests at Vienna and Brussels besides achieving a successful career in his native land, where he is known as a teacher as well as a performer. The typically press-book "puffing" that he receives in the program note to this album is wholly superfluous and likely to do more harm than good. No intelligent listener wants to be told in advance how "truly great" an artist is or about his "fabulous reputation." The recording is there for him to judge, and there are sufficient facts he wishes to know about the interpreter and the music without being told what to think.

Mr. Gilels plays both concertos with a supple, resourceful technique, a good sense of style, and with notable refinement. He does not seek to stun with mere brilliance, but seems always aware of deeper musical values. This is especially noticeable in the Saint-Saëns concerto, which can sound cheap unless it is poetically played. Mr. Gilels does not smash through the climaxes as fiercely as some virtuosos, but his performance of the allegro scherzando movement is wonderfully deft, and he plays the solemn opening with true grandeur. In the Liszt concerto, the octave passages are sometimes blurry but again, Mr. Gilels does not make a Roman holiday of the work but performs it musically. The orchestra plays in routine fashion and is not flatteringly recorded. On the basis of these performances I am eager to hear more of Mr. Gilels.

—R. S.

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## Christmas Oratorio

**BACH:** Christmas Oratorio. *Soloists, Choir and Orchestra of the Detmold Academy of Music with the Collegium Pro Arte, Kurt Thomas Conducting.* (Editions de L'Oiseau-Lyre—London OL 50003, \$17.85) \*\*\*

IN view of the frequent complete performances of Bach's Christmas Oratorio these days, the remark of the noted Bach scholar Arnold Schering in the introduction to his admirable new edition of the work, in 1922, has a deliciously ironic flavor today: "Without cuts, of course, a performance will probably never be possible."

Now it is true, as Schering points out, that Bach never intended the Christmas Oratorio to be performed all at once, or even in two or three parts. But experience has proved that it can be so performed with tremendous effectiveness. It would probably never occur to the listener to this new recording that there was anything wrong about enjoying the music at one sitting, for there are inexhaustible richness and variety in these six cantatas, and the fact that each can be performed by itself in no way prevents their being performed in succession.

Objections to complete performances of the Christmas Oratorio belong in the category of the wrong-headed objections to performances of The Art of Fugue on the grounds that Bach did not write it for public performance and that it is "unsuited" for concert performances. All one needs to do is to hear a fine performance of either work to realize that such pedantic alarms are wholly groundless.

This recording of the Christmas Oratorio is probably the best yet available, and it is satisfying in style and spirit, if not impeccable in some technical details or notable for the beauty of the solo voices and instruments. With repeated listenings, I found that many choral passages that had seemed muddy were being correctly sung but came through rather turgidly in the recording. Mr. Thomas used a chorus of 220 singers in this recording, made in Paris. Such an enormous ensemble is bound to be a bit unwieldy. But the lofty spirit of the singing and the musical authority of conductor and performers is always unmistakable, even if top phrases are not always satisfactorily captured.

Vocal soloists are Gunthild Weber, soprano; Lore Fischer, contralto; Heinz Marten, tenor; and Horst Gunther, bass. The two lower voices are richer in natural texture, but all four artists sing intelligently and with deep feeling for the glories of the music. Nor should the capable and efficient instrumentalists go without praise: Kurt Redel, flute; Helmuth Winschermann, oboe; Werner Heutling and Wilhelm Iselmann, violins; Adam Zeyer, trumpet; Hans Munch-Holland, cello; Hans Drewanz, harpsichord; and Michael Schneider, organ.

There is still ample room for recordings of this marvelous work, but this present one can be heartily recommended to all Bach-lovers.

—R. S.

## Solo Winds

**AMERICANA FOR SOLO WINDS AND STRING ORCHESTRA.** *Eastman-Rochester Symphony, Howard Hanson conducting.* (Mercury MG 40003, \$5.45) \*\*\*

THIS disk, volume 4 in the American Music Festival Series, includes Wayne Barlow's The Winter's Past—Rhapsody for Oboe and Strings; Bernard Rogers' Soliloquy, for flute and strings; Aaron Copland's Quiet City, for trumpet, English horn and string orchestra; Kent Kennan's Night Soliloquy, for flute and string orchestra. Homer Kel-

ler's Serenade for Clarinet and Strings; Howard Hanson's Serenade for Flute, Strings and Harp, and his Pastorale for Oboe, Strings and Harp. The soloists are Robert Sprengle, oboe; Joseph Mariano, flute; William Osseck, clarinet; Sidney Mear, trumpet; Richard Swingle, English horn.

This is a remarkably pretty record. For one thing, the combination of solo winds and strings produces some of the loveliest sounds to be heard. For another, as the record liner notes, "Almost all of these works have been poetic in conception and nostalgic in character." With the exception of the Hanson pieces, the music falls into what is sometimes considered an American idiom, compounded though it is of English, French, German, and Russian materials. Howard Hanson's Serenade and Pastorale remain almost wholly French, but this may have been intentional and is nothing to hold against them, since they are soundly constructed and melodically attractive. Copland's Quiet City, the most distinguished of the works, suggests in its companionship to other works that urban American "nostalgia" is not far removed from its rural counterpart.

A fact of interest: the works cover a wide swatch of time, from Rogers' Soliloquy, dated 1922, to Hanson's Pastorale, dated 1949. The performances are exemplary and imply the good fortune the Eastman-Rochester Symphony enjoys in the quality of its solo wind players.

—R. A. E.

## Woodwinds and Piano

**MOZART:** Quintet, E flat major, K. 452. **BEETHOVEN:** Quintet, E flat major, Op. 16. *Rudolf Serkin, piano, and members of the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet: John de Lancie, oboe; Anthony Gigliotti, clarinet; Sol Schoenbach, bassoon; Mason Jones, horn.* (Columbia ML 4834, \$5.95) \*\*\*

COLUMBIA has wisely paired the Mozart and Beethoven Quintets, as Classic did in its recording of the same works. Since the young Beethoven was using Mozart's quintet as a model for his own work in the same key, a comparison of the two pieces is extraordinarily fruitful. Naturally, the Beethoven music has his own stamp; imitation by a man of genius never results in stale copying. But one can discern some of the lessons relearned from the more mature master.

The performances of both works by Mr. Serkin and the Philadelphia Orchestra musicians, who make up (with William Kincaid, flutist) the Philadelphia Woodwind Quintet, could scarcely be surpassed. Here again, a comparison of their approach and style of playing in the two quintets will offer the perceptive listener a valuable lesson in the art of interpretation. The driving energy and brio they bring to the Beethoven would be out of place in the Mozart music, where they are suaver and more lyric. Piano and winds are exquisitely blended.

—R. S.

## Late Strauss

**STRAUSS, RICHARD:** Symphony for Wind Instruments in E flat major, Op. Post. *M-G-M Orchestra, Izler Solomon conducting.* (M-G-M E3097, \$4.85) \*\*

THIS work, called a Sonatina by the composer and rechristened a symphony by others, is one of two very late compositions. In the spring and summer of 1943, during a convalescence from a serious illness, Strauss composed a Sonatina in F major for winds, with the subtitle "From the Workshop of an Invalid". He entrusted the work to the Dresden

Tonkünstlerverein for its world premiere, in memory of the fact that that organization had given the premiere of his Serenade in E flat major for Thirteen Wind Instruments, Op. 7, over half a century earlier, in 1882. The new Sonatina for winds was scored not for thirteen but for sixteen instruments: four French horns, two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, contrabassoon, clarinet in C, two clarinets in E flat, basset horn, and bass clarinet.

In 1944 and 1945, Strauss composed a second Sonatina for winds, which is the one heard on this recording. It is scored for the same instruments as the first and is made up of four movements, marked Allegro con brio, Andantino, Minuet, and Introduction (Andante) and Allegro. The subtitle of the E flat major Sonatina is "The Cheerful Workshop", and it is dedicated "To Mozart's undying spirit, at the close of a life filled with gratitude". The music is loose in form, diffuse, and reminiscent of earlier Strauss works. But he thought of these late Sonatinas as a sort of personal legacy. They should be listened to in a spirit of affection and reminiscence and not with the rigid standards of the concert hall. The aged composer takes us into his study and

## Records and Audio

chats amiably about music. We should not look for striking ideas or compact form. But the genuine Strauss-lover will find pleasure in this music for sentimental if not intellectual reasons. The performance is well disciplined if not as expansive emotionally as it might have been.

—R. S.

## More La Scala Disks Announced by Angel

Angel Records will continue to issue recordings of the Italian operatic repertory by La Scala artists as the result of an exclusive three-year contract signed recently with the Milan opera house by Electric & Musical Industries Ltd., of Hayes, England. The disks will be issued in England under the Columbia label, a subsidiary of EMI there, and in this country by Angel, the label of Electric & Musical Industries (U. S.) Ltd., of which Dario Soria is president. The new contract calls for a minimum of four recorded operas a year and succeeds the current one-year contract under which six works are being issued.



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# Orchestras in New York

(Continued from page 13)  
Trust Fund, and Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians in this undertaking.

Mr. Scherman and his orchestra played, and played very competently indeed, the first New York performances of music by three composers who work far from this city and its artistic climate. Clifton Williams, of Austin, Tex., was represented by A Southwestern Overture; Holon Matthews, of Kalamazoo, Mich., by his First Symphony; and Elizabeth Gould, of Toledo, Ohio, by her Piano Concerto, in which she was the soloist.

The music, taken in general, was all craftsmanlike, honest, and, to varying degrees, pleasantly old-fashioned. Both Williams and Miss Gould have taken to musical popularism with the kind of spontaneity that precludes sophistication. Matthews, on the other hand, eschews popularism for a kind of nineteenth-century eclecticism. He orchestrates very fetchingly, by the way.

Also presented in the program were Lukas Foss's Song of Songs, with Ellabelle Davis as soprano soloist, and Daniel Gregory Mason's Chanticleer Overture.

—W. F.

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## Tchaikovsky Sixth Played by NBC Symphony

NBC Symphony, Arturo Toscanini, conductor. Carnegie Hall, March 21, 6:30:

Overture to The Barber of Seville  
Symphony No. 6 .....Tchaikovsky

There were moments of high-tension electrical excitement in Mr. Toscanini's reading of the Tchaikovsky symphony—the development section of the first movement was one of them—but, in general, this performance was curiously lacking in concentration. For one thing, the dynamics were conspicuously uniform, and the tempos as they varied from section to section seemed strangely unrelated. The "big line", so essential to this work's successful interpretation, was lost behind a façade of mechanical regularity. But the music sometimes sprang to life, and when it did it showed Mr. Toscanini at something close to his dynamic best. A trim reading of the Barber of Seville Overture opened the program.

—W. F.

## Rubinstein Soloist in Pension Fund Event

New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor. Arturo Rubinstein, pianist. Carnegie Hall, March 22:

Chorale-Prelude, Wir glauben all' an einen Gott, Schöpfung.....Bach-Börsenroth  
Piano Concerto No. 4, G major.....Beethoven  
Piano Concerto No. 1, E minor.....Chopin  
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.....Rachmaninoff

Artur Rubinstein was in magnificent form in this Pension Fund Benefit Concert, and Dimitri Mitropoulos and the Philharmonic-Symphony gave him everything in the way of accompaniment that a pianist could desire. The result was a crescendo of pleasure and excitement that ended in a tumultuous ovation at the close of the Rachmaninoff Rhapsody.

Mr. Rubinstein seemed tireless, and he gave the most powerful and the most daring performance of the work I have heard since Rachmaninoff's. The spirit of Paganini (and of Rachmaninoff, too) was reflected in the diabolic intensity and skill of the playing, as well as in its fascinating shift of moods. Mr. Mitropoulos, always at his best in Rachmaninoff's music, conducted a superb accompaniment.

If Mr. Rubinstein perhaps exceeded himself in the Rhapsody, he certainly equaled his previous interpretations of the Chopin E minor Concerto. The far-flung melodies were faultlessly sung; the phrasing was a miracle of delicacy; and the bravura was always subordinated to musical motives. Nor should the noble performance of the Beethoven Concerto go without a final word of praise.

—R. S.

## Mitropoulos Conducts All-Tchaikovsky Program

New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor. Zino

Francescatti, violinist. Carnegie Hall, March 25:

**ALL-TCHAIKOVSKY PROGRAM**  
Introduction and Fugue from D minor Suite; Violin Concerto; Symphony No. 5.

Tchaikovsky's D major Violin Concerto, memorably performed by Zino Francescatti, was the high point of this program by the Philharmonic-Symphony. It was an extraordinarily fresh bit of air that Mr. Francescatti breathed into this repertory warhorse. His performance of it was small-scaled and intimate, cool and refined, with not a trace of the sentimentality or phrasological distortion that this piece so often falls victim to. And yet Mr. Francescatti's Tchaikovsky sang, and it sang both eloquently and meltingly.

A piece not heard hereabouts for years, the Introduction and Fugue from Tchaikovsky's Suite No. 1, opened the program. It is a sprightly bit of contrapuntal chicanery, this piece, and an amusing one. Mr. Mitropoulos ran through the Fifth Symphony a bit haphazardly, and the orchestra did not sound as lovely as it can.

The above program, with the exception of a single substitution, was repeated on the following Sunday afternoon. On this occasion Schubert's Second Symphony, in a bright, shiny performance, replaced Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony. Zino Francescatti repeated his glowing performance of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.

—W. F.

## Manhattan School Introduces Giannini Symphony

Manhattan Orchestra, Franco Autori conducting. Manhattan School of Music, March 26:

Symphony in D.....Gossec  
Symphony in One Movement.....Vittorio Giannini  
(First New York performance)  
Symphony in E minor.....Tchaikovsky

The feature of this concert was the new symphony by Vittorio Giannini, head of the composition department of the Manhattan School of Music. Its single movement runs some 25 minutes and contains all the elements of a complete standard-size symphony. There is a sort of rondo quality in the way the composer alternates powerful pages with quiet episodes. The latter are the only sections cast in relatively strong dissonant terms. For the rest, Mr. Giannini is content—and well might he be—to whip up brilliant orchestral frenzies suggestive of Strauss, but in a personal style that shows assimilation, not imitation, of that composer. For these are extremely exciting pages, although they do not indicate that the work is but a few years old.

Mr. Autori conducted the school orchestra with a sure and steady hand. The players, particularly the strings, performed with precision and point, and all combined to make the rich sonorities of the new work especially attractive.

—A. B.

## Varga Soloist With Philharmonic-Symphony

The Saturday evening concert of the Philharmonic-Symphony under Dimitri Mitropoulos, on March 27, presented the orchestra's first cellist, Laszlo Varga, as soloist in Lalo's Concerto in D minor. The young artist, of Hungarian birth and a former member of the Lener String Quartet, revealed a beautiful tone and a lofty approach to the work. Its content, however, was not of salient enough character to yield a decisive impression of his interpretative powers. This is not a score of bold outlines and rich color such as the Symphonie Espagnole, but it does contain some attractive lyric pages and suave workmanship. Mr. Varga received excellent co-operation from the orchestra and a warm ovation at the close.

The program otherwise offered a repetition of Cimarosa's Overture to

Laszlo Varga



The Beautiful Grecian, delightfully played, and Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, of which Mr. Mitropoulos gave an amply dramatic and large-toned interpretation.

—R. M. K.

## Munch Is Guest Conductor With NBC Symphony

Charles Munch made his first appearance with the NBC Symphony on March 28, conducting an all-French program listing Debussy's Iberia, Ravel's Le Tombeau de Couperin, and Roussel's ballet suite Bacchus and Ariane. Seasoned by the fiery Italian temperaments of Arturo Toscanini, and of Guido Cantelli, who filled Mr. Munch's shoes in Boston over the weekend, the radio orchestra did not relax for a moment under the somewhat more gentle hand of the French conductor. His readings of the three familiar items in his repertory set forth every nuance of color and mood in its appropriate setting. The Roussel Suite still sounds as vital and fresh as it did when Mr. Munch introduced it in this country several seasons ago.

—C. B.

## OTHER CONCERTS

**Alfredo Antonini** conducted the CBS Radio Orchestra in the network's Twentieth Century Concert Hall broadcast of March 7. Conductor for the following week's program was **Leopold Stokowski**. The fifth and final concert in the **New York Philharmonic - Symphony's** young people's series at Carnegie Hall was given in March 20, with Virginia MacWatters, Jean Madeira, Frank Guarrera, Nicola Moscona, and Ernest McChesney as assisting artists. The program also brought the local debut of **Samuel Sander**, sixteen-year-old pianist, of the Bronx. A **Composers Forum** at McMillin Theatre, also on the 20th, presented works by Leonard Ratner and Hall Overton, some of which received first performances in New York. **Richard Dyer-Bennet** made his final Town Hall appearance of the season on March 21. The Norwegian conductor **Olvin Feldstad** made his United States debut with the CBS Radio Orchestra on the same afternoon. **Ella Goldstein**, winner of the first prize in the 1953 International Busoni Competition for Pianists in Bolzano, Italy, and the first woman artist to receive this honor, was heard in recital at Kaufmann Auditorium on March 25. The **International Society for Contemporary Music** gave its third concert of the season on March 28 at the McMillan Theatre. Other events on that March Sunday were a chamber program by familiar **Circle-in-the-Square** artists listing Fromm Music Foundation Award works, a **Music in the Making** concert at Cooper Union; and another of CBS's Concert Hall programs conducted by **Howard Shanet**.

## Virginia Orchestra Appoints First Manager

RICHMOND, VA.—Jack Leipard, horn player with the Virginia Symphony and a former representative of Community Concerts, has been appointed as the first full-time manager of the orchestra.



# Recitals in New York

## Concert Choir Town Hall, March 11

The Concert Choir, under the direction of Margaret Hillis, presented unusual and seldom heard choral works in this concert of vocal chamber music. One of these, taking well over half an hour to perform, was the madrigal-comedy *Festino* (Party on the Evening of "Fat Thursday") by the sixteenth-century Italian monk-organist-composer-theorist-poet, Banchieri. Divided into twenty sections and scored for five mixed voices, the work, an early example of descriptive program music, is peppered with ingenious vocal devices effectively imitating, through the use of nonsense words and syllables, the sounds produced by the Jew's harp, lyre, and lute. One of its most hilarious sections—and a masterly bit of contrapuntal writing it is—is the one entitled *Bastial Counterpoint in Good Spirit*. Voices imitating a dog, a cuckoo, a cat, and an owl weave a crazy-quilt pattern of counterpoint above a mock-solemn cantus firmus in the bass. Interspersed with the tomfoolery, however, are sections, like the *Madrigal to a Sweet Nightingale*, of exquisitely beautiful choral writing.

Miss Hillis never stressed the special effects at the expense of the musical values. She kept the parts moving, voice against voice, with perfect balance, finely shaded dynamics, and with a purity of tone that often bordered on the heavenly.

The choir opened the program with a spirited reading of *La Guerre*, another example of early descriptive music by the sixteenth-century French composer Jannetquin. This work also makes use of onomatopoeic-syllables to suggest battle horns, clashing swords, etc., but, except for being a vocal tour de force, its value is more musicological than musical.

Notable for exquisite phrasing, sensuous beauty of tone, and evocation of mood was the choir's singing of the *Huit Chansons* by Poulenc and the *Trois Chansons* by Debussy. These works, too, were given with perfection of detail. In the Brahms *Liedeslieder Walzer*, Op. 52, Miss Hillis drew a rich, lush tonal texture from the choral group of twenty-odd singers in a performance that was warm and glowing and full of sentiment. Patricia Roth Ienni and Konrad Wolff, playing the piano-duet accompaniment, were likewise a joy to listen to.

—R. K.

## Roberto Eyzaguirre, Pianist Town Hall, March 13, 3 p.m. (Debut)

The Peruvian pianist Roberto Eyzaguirre, making his Town Hall debut in this recital, presented as his major Barber's Sonata in E flat minor. The young exchange pianist's approach to this music was serious almost to the point of dullness. His playing was clean-cut and accurate technically, limited on the dynamic level to soft and loud, and, in fast passages, lacking in momentum. His overuse of weight touch while it made for richly sonorous chord-work, nonetheless kept his playing grounded as it were. He did, however, achieve a nice glassy effect in the *Allegro vivace* of the Barber Sonata, and he drew a liquid tone from the instrument in Debussy's *Reflets dans l'eau*.

—R. K.

## Vytautas Bacevicius, Pianist Town Hall, March 13

Vytautas Bacevicius offered a program that included the premiere of his own Sonata, Op. 53, No. 4, as the chief selection; Franck's Prelude, Fugue and Variations, Op. 18, a Chopin group; Tcherépin's Petite



Joseph and Lillian Fuchs

Suite; and items by Liszt, Debussy, and Ciurlionis. The Lithuanian pianist played these works with his usual rich, full tone, if not the technical address he has displayed on former occasions. His new sonata is admirably pianistic, and the performer made the most of its lavish sonorities. It is not a particularly well-developed work, though; and its late-nineteenth-century musical thought in Prokofievian harmonic dress does not spin out with any great sense of continuity or urgency.

—A. B.

## Jennie Tourel, Mezzo-soprano Town Hall, March 14

Miss Tourel's recital, distinguished in both content and performance, began with Torelli's *Tu lo sai* and a recitative and aria from Alessandro Scarlatti's *Il Mitridate Eupatore*. The three songs that make up Rossini's *La Regatta Veneziana*, Debussy's four *Proses lyriques*, a group of Russian songs, and Moussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death* completed the printed list. The equally rewarding encores included a premiere, Leonard Bernstein's *Silhouette in Galilee*, a fine, subtly organized, expressive song, which deserves a place on other recital programs.

The mezzo-soprano was in excellent voice, her virtuosity scarcely undiminished, her sense of style inarguable, her diction and phrasing impeccable. The recital seemed to progress from one peak of excellence to another, from the sparkling grace of the delightful Rossini canzonettas, to the sustained, richly colored moods of the Debussy songs, and finally to the overwhelming Moussorgsky cycle. Perhaps because it was the finest music in the program, the cycle seemed like Miss Tourel's most memorable contribution of the evening. The dramatic spell woven by the composer was re-created in all its illuminating detail and tragic compassion. In Miss Tourel's performance, sung in Russian, the work had a shattering impact on the listener.

George Reeves's accompaniments were a model of style and rapport with the singer; in view of this, the anachronistic harmonization he used in the Torelli was a little startling.

—R. A. E.

## Musicians' Guild Town Hall, March 15

The Musicians' Guild, in the fourth concert of their eighth season, performed a program of lovable chamber music, and, as is their custom, they

played every note of it with enormous affection and understanding. Beethoven's C minor Trio for Violin, Viola and Cello was given in an elegantly phrased, beautifully co-ordinated performance by Joseph and Lillian Fuchs and Leonard Rose; and the Kroll Quartet very nearly equalled this perfection with a musicianly, if rather overgentle, performance of Haydn's String Quartet in F minor, Op. 20, No. 5. Two relatively new works occupied the second half of the program: Frederick Jacobi's Sonata for Cello and Piano (played superbly by Mr. Rose and Irene Jacobi), and George Enesco's Octet in C major, Op. 7, performed by the Kroll Quartet along with Harry Zarief and David Mankovitz, violinists; Miss Fuchs, violist; and Ralph Oxman, cellist. Both works are ultra-conservative, but not a bit stuffy or dull.

—W. F.

## Evening of Music Central Presbyterian Church, March 15

The first of the three Evenings of Music being given at the Central Presbyterian Church was devoted to choral music, in which the church choir of 22 mixed voices under the direction of Hugh Giles, organist-choirmaster, was assisted by William Hess, tenor; Vera Zorina, narrator; Carlton Cooley, violist; and Allan Curtiss, bass, a member of the choir.

The major works heard in this program were Darius Milhaud's cantata *Miracles of Faith*, for chorus, solo tenor, and narrator, and Gabriel Fauré's *Messe Basse*, for women's voices, both of which, so far as is known, were given first New York performances.

Milhaud's cantata, based on the Biblical story of Daniel and the more ambitious of the two works, sounded too patently contrived, with its bizarre and sensational effects calculated to astonish, to make much of a lasting impression. Where the writing wasn't sensational it tended to be dull and meandering. The vocal scoring seemed unduly ungrateful for the singers, so that the voice of the narrator—Miss Zorina—really fell like a benediction on the ears. The most interesting part of the score, the organ accompaniment, sounded as though it had been lifted right out of Dupré's *Passion Symphony*. The performers did their best to make the work as effective as possible; it wasn't their fault that the listener had to follow the printed words to know what the singing was all about even though they sang it in English.

Fauré's setting of the Mass, on the other hand, proved to be as pleasantly innocuous as the Milhaud was pretentious. Its sugary melodies and simple harmonizations sounded more like Massenet than Fauré. The women of the choir, with Mr. Giles providing an unobtrusive organ accompaniment, sang it with an ethereal beauty of tone and with just the right naive reverence to minimize its cloying properties.

Earlier in the evening, the choir was heard to excellent advantage in a cappella motets by Alessandro Scarlatti, Richard Farrant, and Johannes Eccard. Mr. Hess sang the Three Hymns for Tenor Solo by Ralph Vaughan Williams with commendable artistry, while Mr. Cooley played the lovely viola obligatos with a beauty of tone I have never heard surpassed by any other violist.

—R. K.

## Helen Phillips, Soprano Town Hall, March 16

Helen Phillips' recital was distinguished both in its vocal aspects and with regard to the program she offered a large and enthusiastic audience. The soprano had a voice that, despite certain unevenness, is attractive and dynamically effective over its full range, an extended one at that. Her

(Continued on page 23)

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## Metropolitan Opera

### Carmen, March 11

Three members of this cast of Carmen were heard in their roles for the first time this season. They were Fedora Barbieri as Carmen, Hilde Gueden as Micaëla, and Renato Capecchi as Escamillo. The singers offered pretty much what might have been expected from them: Miss Barbieri was a resonantly effective, if unsuited Carmen; Miss Gueden was a lovely Micaëla, who this evening sang her music with special purity and beauty; and Mr. Capecchi a rousing, full-voiced Escamillo. The rest of the cast included Norman Scott, who took over for the indisposed Osie Hawkins as Zuniga, Clifford Harvuot, Heidi Krall, Margaret Roggero, George Cehanovsky, and Alessio De Paolis. Tibor Kozma was the conductor. —W. F.

### Il Barbiere di Siviglia, March 12

In the season's fourth performance of the Metropolitan Opera's new production of Rossini's comedy, Dolores Wilson was heard for the first time at the Metropolitan in the role of Rosina. Two other artists made their first appearances this season in their roles and in the new production: Frank Guarrera, as Figaro, and Gerhard Pechner, as Dr. Bartolo.

Miss Wilson both sang and acted expertly. Her voice sounded fresh, and she brought animation to the part. She did not affect the manners of a great star, but gave a modest and winning performance in which redoubtable skill was properly subordinated to dramatic effect.

Mr. Guarrera's Figaro was wonderfully effervescent. This young artist is an exemplary worker, and he has improved by leaps and bounds in style, grace, and range of dramatic power in recent seasons. His Figaro was not only charming but musically distinguished in many passages, notably the ensembles, where Figaros are wont to grow careless. Mr. Pechner, if not very Italianate, was extremely funny, and he sang accurately and dependably, as he almost invariably does.

The others in the cast, in familiar roles, were Cesare Valletti, as Count Almaviva; Cesare Siepi, as Don Basilio; Jean Madeira, as Berta; George Cehanovsky, as Fiorello; Alessio De Paolis, as the Sergeant; and Rudolf Mayreder, as Ambrogio. All of them were in top form. Alberto Erede conducted with praiseworthy refinement, if a little too timidly for the scintillating bravura of this heady score. —R. S.

### Boris Godounoff, March 15

George London's conception of the role of Boris, seen again in this eighth performance of the season of Moussorgsky's masterpiece, has remained a thoughtfully considered, highly intelligent one. The bass-baritone's ideas about the character were projected with dramatic clarity and effectiveness, and yet with the good taste and restraint that kept the role within the framework of the stage action and expressly related to the discriminating, less flamboyant scoring now used at the Metropolitan. Every word Mr. London sang was understandable, and the music had a gloomy regality, dramatic accent, and a sense of foreboding in his vocal coloration. Also in the cast were Nell Rankin (visually very handsome as Marina), Genevieve Warner, Jean Madeira, Mildred Miller, Herta Glaz, Norman Scott, Charles Kullman, Giulio Gari (miscast as Dimitri), Clifford Har-

vuot, Lorenzo Alvary, and Paul Franke. Fritz Stiedry conducted. —R. A. E.

### Die Walküre, March 17

The fourth and final hearing of Wagner's Die Walküre drew a fairly large audience in view of the rival attractions of St. Patrick's Day. The cast was a strong one (difficult to match anywhere today in this work), heard in previous performances, with one exception, that of Margaret Roggero, who sang her first Rossweisse with the company. She was an apt exponent of the Valkyrie, despite opportunities limited to the ensemble scene of Act III. Appearing in major roles once more were Margaret Harshaw, as Brünnhilde; Astrid Varnay, Siegmund; Set Svanholm, Siegmund; Blanche Thebom, Fricka; Ferdinand Frantz, Wotan; Hans Hotter, Hunding. The conducting of Fritz Stiedry was again a notable achievement, and the stage direction of Herbert Graf (with the excellent use of projected effects in the final act) was again dramatically stirring. —R. M. K.

### Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci March 18

The venerable operatic twins, sired by Mascagni and Leoncavallo, were thrust into the breach caused by the still-mysterious withdrawal of Simon Boccanegra previously scheduled for revival at this time. The performances of the two operas had all the earmarks of hasty substitution but they provided an evening of substantial, if unenchanting, entertainment.

Zinka Milanov and Kurt Baum were the main protagonists in Cavalleria, and they made up in vocal power and lustre what they may have lacked in dramatic conviction. On their lips, the thrice-familiar melodies of Mascagni sounded as fresh and stimulating as ever they were. Mildred Miller and Frank Valentino gave able support in the roles of Lola and Alfio, as did Thelma Votipka in that of Lucia.

Pagliacci began promisingly with a splendid Prologue by Leonard Warren, the Tonio. But thereafter, as in the previous opera, the performance turned perfunctory, and for all the fine voices employed and the operatic wisdom and experience compounded many times over among the other participants, the tragic story of the clown could not gather the momentum of tension and excitement its verismo style urgently demands. Again there was much fine singing. In addition to Mr. Warren's brilliant and loudly acclaimed performance, there was the luscious, brilliant-toned Nedda of Lucine Amara, one of the Metropolitan's most promising young voices. There was also the clear, firm vocalism of Ramon Vinay as Canio and the ever-dependable voices of Paul Franke and Renato Capecchi as Beppe and Silvio respectively. Each in his individual moments produced something treasurable; but together, there was an indefinable want of rapport. Alberto Erede conducted both operas. —R. E.

### La Traviata, March 19

At the season's last performance of Verdi's La Traviata, Eleanor Steber made her only appearance this season as Violetta, which was a pity, since she both sang and acted the role (after a nervous first act) with great artistic skill and memorable pathos. In the last act, especially, Miss Steber was deeply moving. Heidi Krall, as Flora Bervoix, and Lawrence Davidson, as Baron Douphol, were heard for the first time at the Metropolitan

in those roles. Miss Krall sang beautifully, even if she looked a little modern for the period in which the production is set. Mr. Davidson was excellent in his minor part. Osie Hawkins, as the Marquis d'Obigny, and Clifford Harvuot, as Doctor Grenvil, made their first appearances of the season in their roles. The rest of the cast was familiar, with Jan Peerce, as Alfredo; Renato Capecchi, as Giorgio Germont; Maria Leone, as Annina; and Gabor Carelli, as Gastone. Fausto Cleva conducted with feeling and animation. Miss Steber's Violetta is a characterization which no one should miss, for it brings out her greatest powers of dramatic projection. —R. S.

### Faust, March 20

This special performance for the benefit of the Vassar Club Scholarship Fund was interesting as presenting a largely American cast. Conducted by Kurt Adler with stylistic knowledge, the Gounod opera had Thomas Hayward appearing for the second time this season in the title role. His impersonation was well grounded and his singing fresh, if not of the highest sensuousity. Frank Guarrera was the Valentin, of considerable aristocracy in song and of distinguished bearing. George London dominated the cast as a suavely elegant Mephistopheles, with substantial vocal command. He riveted attention whenever he was on stage. Nadine Conner was again the Marguerite. Others heard were Mildred Miller as a spirited Siebel; Thelma Votipka as a broadly comic Marthe, and Lawrence Davidson as Wagner. The chorus and ballet were again outstanding in the newly-stylized, E. T. A. Hoffmann-esque staging of Peter Brook. —R. M. K.

### Boris Godounoff, March 23

The highlight of this performance of the Moussorgsky opera, the last of the season, was Jerome Hines's portrayal of the title role, a repeat for which we had to wait nearly five weeks. His penetrating insight into the particular form of dementia that led to the great Czar's downfall (only a Russian could literally worry himself to death) and his successful projection of its subtlest manifestations contributed to what has probably become one of the most impressive achievements by a single artist at the Metropolitan this year. As intelligently drawn as it was, Mr. Hines's Boris was emotionally persuasive and consistently exciting vocally. It was effectively matched by another outstanding characterization, the Shuiski of Charles Kullman, who was substituting for Paul Franke. Though he had spent most of the afternoon in an open dress rehearsal of Parsifal, Mr. Kullman delivered a strong, clear-voiced performance, making a convincing contrast between the patronizing Shuiski, the "humble servant" of Boris, and the self-possessed Shuiski, spokesman for the Opposition.

The occasion also marked the first appearance of Lubomir Vichegonov as Brother Pimen. After a rather tentative beginning in the first act, he showed considerable gain in confidence in his narrative in the Duma scene. He sang with a rich, full tone throughout, but the performance lost some of its force in being virtually unintelligible. Other principal roles were sung by Mildred Miller, Nell Rankin, Giulio Gari, and Charles Anthony. Tibor Kozma conducted with gratifying precision and vigor. —C. B.

### Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci March 24

A previously-heard cast, including Kurt Baum, Zinka Milanov and Mildred Miller, and Frank Valentino, sang a remarkably sound and beautiful performance of Cavalleria, under the baton of Renato Cellini, who substituted for the ailing Alberto Erede.



## Metropolitan Opera

The performance of Pagliacci, however, brought two singers to new roles at the Metropolitan. Gino Penno sang his first Canio, and it was, in general, less than satisfying. His acting was sketchy, his singing strident and sometimes coarse. Charles Anthony, heard for the first time as Beppe, seemed comfortable enough in the role and managed moments of really lovely singing. Leonard Warren was Tonio; Lucine Amara, Nedda; and Renato Capecchi, Silvio.

—W. F.

### Fledermaus, March 25

The season's fifth and final performance of Fledermaus brought Regina Resnik in the role of Rosalinda for the first time this year. The otherwise familiar cast was headed by Patrice Munsell; Jarmila Novotna, Charles Kullman, Thomas Hayward, and John Brownlee, all under the knowing direction of Tibor Kozma. Miss Resnik's Rosalinda was a fairly bumptious lass, and her spirit of good fun was obviously infectious to her teammates on stage. The performance also benefited greatly by the presence of Miss Novotna as Orlofsky, whose natural elegance and charm dominated the Party Scene.

—C. B.

### Parsifal, March 26

The season's first performance of Wagner's Parsifal introduced a new Gurnemanz to Metropolitan Opera audiences: Ferdinand Frantz. James McCracken, also, was heard for the first time there in the role of the First Knight of the Grail. The rest of the cast were familiar in their roles: Charles Kullman, as Parsifal; Astrid Varnay, as Kundry; George London, as Amfortas; Lubomir Vichogonov, as Titurel; Gerhard Pechner, as Klingsor; and, in other parts, Jean Madeira, Osie Hawkins, Genevieve Warner, Mildred Miller, Paul Franke, and Gabor Carelli. The leading Flower Maidens, who sang exceptionally well, were Lucine Amara, Maria Leone, Herta Glaz, Heidi Krall, Jean Fenn, and Margaret Roggero.

The music of Parsifal, like that of Siegfried, is especially close to Fritz Siedry's heart, and he invariably conducts it with glowing imagination and tenderness. Singers, chorus, and orchestra brought a spirit of consecration to this performance, which was much smoother than the first

Parsifal of the season usually is at the Metropolitan.

Mr. Frantz, always an intelligent and discerning artist, sang the role of Gurnemanz eloquently. Occasionally one wished for greater weight of voice and impact of personality, but the feeling was always right and the various shades of the character were skillfully delineated. Thus, the gruff impatience of Gurnemanz in Act I had mellowed into loving-kindness in Act III. Mr. Frantz brought a note of touching naivete into the dialogue with Parsifal in the Good Friday scene; he made the old man extraordinarily lifelike.

Mr. Kullman acted the title role so well that his lack of vocal power in the climaxes was easily discounted. He was especially effective in Act II in the scene with the Flower Maidens and Kundry, which can easily lose its dramatic tension if it is clumsily handled. Miss Varnay's Kundry is the most gripping and the most subtly thought-out of any I have ever encountered, with the sole exception of Kerstin Thorborg's unforgettable impersonation of this baffling figure. She sang and acted beautifully at this performance, and her voice was notably lustrous in the sustained pianos and pianissimos of the narrative and temptation episodes.

Although I was deeply impressed by George London's Amfortas before, it seemed even better this season, both in plasticity and in vocal assurance. Mr. London leaves nothing to chance or the whim of the moment; he has the finish of a veteran, young as he is. The others in the cast also deserve praise for a memorably eloquent performance.

—R. S.

### Norma, March 27

The season's second performance of the Metropolitan Opera's revival of Norma, on March 27, found the singers in excellent form. This was especially gratifying since it was a Saturday matinee broadcast, and listeners throughout the country could enjoy the work in a spirited and admirably sung interpretation. Zinka Milanov again had the title role; Cesare Siepi was heard as Orovoso; Gino Penno, as Pollione; Blanche Thebom, as Adalgisa; Maria Leone, as Clotilde; and Paul Franke, as Flavio.

Miss Thebom was the only new member of the cast, replacing Fedora Barbieri. Her sumptuous voice

(Continued on page 34)



### IN THE NORTHWEST

William Olvis, tenor, with officers of the Kelso, Wash. Civic Music Association. From the left, Mrs. E. A. Mitchelen, treasurer; Mrs. Lloyd Erickson, secretary; Mrs. Earl W. Martin, president; Norma Olvis, wife of the tenor and his accompanist; Mr. Olvis; and Bernard Butler, vice-president

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# Los Angeles Philharmonic Season Ends; Opera Groups Heard in Three Works

**Los Angeles**  
THE Los Angeles Philharmonic ended its subscription concerts for the 1953-54 season on March 25 and 26, with Alfred Wallenstein conducting and Jascha Heifetz the soloist in a grandly scaled interpretation of the Beethoven Violin Concerto. Some of the season's finest playing was revealed in the conductor's reading of the Rachmaninoff Second Symphony. The preface to the program was Haydn's Fantasia in C major, originally for piano, in an effective transcription by Frederick W. Kuphal, the orchestra's long-time librarian.

The two subscription series were combined for a single performance of the Brahms Requiem, in Shrine Auditorium on March 12. The augmented Roger Wagner Chorale was led by Mr. Wallenstein in a deeply sympathetic interpretation, sung with splendid power and infinite subtlety of nuance and reinforced by some beautiful orchestral playing. The excellent soloists were Robert Weede, baritone, and Marie Gibson, soprano.

Ernst Krenek's new Cello Concerto received a premiere hearing in the concerts of March 4 and 5, with the solo ably played by Margaret Aue, first desk cellist of the orchestra, Mr. Wallenstein conducting. The work is mostly in a strict twelve-tone style and treats its material with vast ingenuity and with ample opportunity for display on the part of the solo instrument; but its over-all properties are not of the most ingratiating kind.

Paul Badura-Skoda made his first local appearance as soloist in the programs of March 18 and 19, playing the Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 1. This was agile and exuberant playing, though somewhat lacking in tonal variety and strict rhythmic control. Four young women violinists of the orchestra—Dixie Blackstone, Viola Wasterlain, Marjorie Knapp and Thelma Beach—exhibited an exhilarating ensemble in Maurer's Symphonie Concertante, Op. 55, and were loudly acclaimed by the audience.

## Orchestral Balance Sheet

The statement of income and expense for the year ending June 30, 1953, of the Southern California Symphony Association, which sponsors the Los Angeles Philharmonic, shows total operating and production costs of \$539,334.70. The total income from operations was \$336,874.35, making a total operating loss of \$202,460.35. Other income, including \$223,390.34 from the continuance fund, resulted in a net income for the year of \$40,608.86.

Nicolai's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* was given four performances by the opera department of the University of Southern California school of music, in Bovard Auditorium on March 13, 14, 19 and 20. Carl Ebert staged a production that skillfully stressed the comic elements, and Walter Ducloux ably conducted.

The Evenings on the Roof concert of March 8 offered the premiere of three songs from William Shakespeare by Igor Stravinsky, dedicated to the organization. The texts are Musick to Heare (Sonnet VIII), Full Fathom Five from *The Tempest*, and When Daisies Pied from *Love's Labour's Lost*. Sung by Grace-Lynne Martin, soprano, with an accompaniment of flute, clarinet and viola, they are in the composer's characteristically dry, concentrated late style, with little attempt at realistic delineation of the texts. The program also included the first local hearing of Stravinsky's Septet (1953)

and the Cantata for soprano, tenor, female chorus and small instrumental ensemble. Robert Craft conducted, the chorus was the Occidental College Women's Chorus, and the soloists were Miss Martin and Richard Robinson, tenor. The Roof concert of March 1 was given by the ensembles that won the Coleman Auditions.

Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro* was given a sparkling performance by the Los Angeles City College Workshop on March 6 and 7, in the Ruth and Thomas Martin translation. Hugo Strelitzer conducted; the staging was by Vladimir Rosing.

John Vincent's ballet *Three Jacks* was given a first performance under the auspices of the Los Angeles Chamber Symphony, in Royce Hall on March 16. It was paired with Menotti's *The Medium*, in which the

title role was powerfully portrayed by Claramae Turner. Jan Popper conducted both works.

Other events enlisted Victoria de Los Angeles, Thorne Hall, March 11; Joanna and Nikolai Graudan, Eudice Shapiro and Mitchell Lurie in a chamber-music program in the Music Guild series, March 17, Wilshire Ebell Theatre; Gina Bachauer, pianist, Wilshire Ebell Theatre, March 9; Gerhart Muench, pianist, Royce Hall, March 5; Harriette Ann Gray and dance company, Royce Hall, March 7; Roth Quartet, UCLA March 3, 17, 31; Anna Russell, Wilshire Ebell Theatre, March 12 and 13.

—ALBERT GOLDBERG

## Szigeti Autobiography Set for Translations

Joseph Szigeti's autobiography, *With Strings Attached*, published by Alfred A. Knopf and now in its third printing, is being translated into Spanish and Hebrew. The Spanish translation will be released concurrently with Mr. Szigeti's tour of South and Central America, beginning May 21.

## Ohio Civic Orchestra Closes Twelfth Season

MIDDLETOWN, OHIO.—The Middletown Civic Symphony, Valda Wilkerson, conductor, will close its twelfth season with a concert on April 25 in which the local high-school chorus and Peter Paul Lyanich, pianist, will join in a performance of Constant Lambert's *Rio Grande*. The same program will also present the winners of the orchestra's annual music contest, Thomas Reed, baritone, and Carol West, horn player, both student artists. The orchestra of sixty players forms its ranks with local professionals and a number of instrumentalists from the Cincinnati Symphony, Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and the Air Force Band at Wright Field. In line with its policy of encouraging participation by local talent, the orchestra holds student auditions each spring and collaborates actively with various Middletown arts groups. Professional soloists who have appeared in its concerts include Soulima Stravinsky, the Mames-Gimpel-Silva Trio, Nell Tangenian, and Ray Lev.

## CLAUDE DELVINCOURT

GROSSETO, ITALY.—Claude Delvincourt, 64, composer and director of the Paris Conservatory, was killed on April 5 in an automobile accident here while on his way to Rome for the Rome Music Conference, which opened the previous day. A Delvincourt string quartet was scheduled to be performed in a chamber-music program on April 11.

Mr. Delvincourt, born in Paris in 1888, was a pupil of Charles Marie Widor at the Paris Conservatory and won the Prix de Rome in 1913 for his cantata *Faust et Hélène*. Following his service in World War I, during which he lost the use of one eye, he was decorated with Croix de Guerre and was made an Officer of the Legion of Honor. He became director of the conservatory in 1941, and was founder and conductor of its youth orchestra during the German occupation. Among his compositions were *Fête de l'automne*, for tenor solo, chorus, and orchestra, written for the Paris Exposition of 1937; a popular *Prélude choréographique*, for orchestra; and the operas *Lucifer* and *Bal Venetien*, given at the Paris Opéra-Comique in 1942, as well as a number of songs and arrangements of French popular airs.

## ANTONIO MODARELLI

CHARLESTON, W. VA.—Antonio Modarelli, 55, conductor of the Charleston Symphony, died at his home here on April 1. Widely recognized as a composer, conductor, and administrator, Mr. Modarelli arrived in Charleston in 1942 and began an immediate search for instrumentalists in local schools and industrial plants. He was currently in his eleventh season with the orchestra here, having lifted it to national prominence during his tenure as conductor.

Mr. Modarelli, born in Braddock, Penna., and a graduate of the Dana Musical Institute in Warren, Ohio, was conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony for seven years before he assumed a similar post in Wheeling in 1937. He began commuting to Charleston to conduct the local orchestra when its previous conductor, W. R. Wiant, went into military service.

## ZOLTAN KURTHY

LOS ANGELES.—Zoltan Kurthy, 52, composer, conductor, and violinist with the New York Philharmonic-Symphony for nineteen years, died here on March 20. Having won distinction as a composer in his native Hungary, Mr. Kurthy heard several of his works introduced in this coun-

## Obituaries

try after his arrival here in the early 1920s. He joined the Philharmonic in 1923, and from 1925 until his departure for California in 1934, he was first violinist with the orchestra. During the 1943-44 season, he was assistant conductor of the Los Angeles Symphony.

## FREDERIC S. EVANS

Frederic S. Evans, 90, former dean and director of the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, died at his home in Queens, N. Y., on April 3. After his debut in New York as a pianist, playing with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra under Walter Damrosch, Mr. Evans joined the Cincinnati piano faculty in 1889. He was associated with the school until his retirement in 1932.

## ANTHONY PAGANUCCI

Anthony Paganucci, 60, composer of the operettas *The Puppet King* and *The Laughing Cavalier*, died at his New York home on Feb. 22. Though born in Brooklyn, Mr. Paganucci attended the Pacini Institute at Lucca, Italy. He returned to this country to conduct at the Manhattan Opera House and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He was also music director of the Thomas Edison Laboratory in West Orange, N. J., and a coach of opera and concert singers.

## MRS. BARBARA VON MECK

Mrs. Barbara von Meck, 64, Tchaikovsky biographer, died at New York's Mt. Sinai Hospital on Feb. 24. She was the widow of the Russian artist Vladimir von Meck, grandson of Nadejda von Meck, who was a patron of the composer. In 1937 she collaborated with Catherine Drinker Bowen in writing *Beloved Friend: The Romance of Tchaikovsky and Nadejda von Meck*.

## RUTH WONSER SWARTHOUT

PLANDOME, N. Y.—Ruth Wonsler Swarthout, mother of Gladys Swarthout, opera and concert singer, died here on April 6 at the home of another daughter, Mrs. Harold Slaughter. Following the graduation of her two daughters from Bush Conservatory in Chicago, Mrs. Swarthout was associated with some of the early organized-audience concert plans. She lived in New York after 1930, upon her retirement from this activity. She is survived also by a grand-

daughter, Jane Slaughter, an artist resident in Italy.

## AUGUST HELMECKE

August Helmecke, 84, retired Goldman Band drummer, died at Long Island Hospital on Feb. 26. Mr. Helmecke made his last appearance with the Goldman Band at a Guggenheim Memorial Concert in July, 1952. He played his first engagement at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. He joined the band organized by Edwin Franko Goldman in its initial season in 1911 and, at the time of his retirement, was the last surviving member beside Mr. Goldman himself, who termed him "the greatest drummer in the land".

## RALPH C. WENTWORTH

BROADALBIN, N. Y.—Ralph C. Wentworth, 63, a field representative for Broadcast Music, Inc., died here on March 18. Mr. Wentworth joined New York's radio station WEA (now WNBC) in 1923 as a singer and an announcer and was later a program director and announcer for the Columbia Broadcasting System. He joined BMI in 1943.

## RALPH H. LYMAN

CLAREMONT, CALIF.—Ralph H. Lyman, 69, professor emeritus of applied music and head of the music department of Pomona College from 1917 to 1948, died here on March 15.

## ARTHUR WEISS

BERKELEY, CALIF.—Arthur Weiss, 85, a former cellist with the San Francisco Symphony, died at his home here on March 5. A native of Budapest, Mr. Weiss was holder of a doctor's degree from the University of California. He played with the San Francisco orchestra for 31 years until his retirement in 1929.

## ERNEST WAGNER

Ernest F. Wagner, 77, former member of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony and one of the organization's oldest pensioned musicians, died at his home in Merrick, L. I., on March 4. Born in Chicago, Mr. Wagner joined the Philharmonic in 1903 and remained with the orchestra as solo piccolo and flute player for 41 years until his retirement in 1944.

## RICHARD PATZIG

INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA.—Richard Patzig, 93, co-founder of the Bayreuth festivals and reportedly the last survivor of the "Wagnerian days", died here on Feb. 13. Mr. Patzig also founded the William Tell festival plays in Switzerland.



## Recitals in New York

(Continued from page 19)

top tones sometimes lost their support at full volume, but her breath control in this register in mezza-voice passages bordered on the miraculous. In the lower range, her voice had a warm, cello-like quality that she tended to exploit for dramatic effect. This is not to say that Miss Phillips' singing was in any way pretentious; it was consistently musical and expressively sincere. Opening with two arias from Vivaldi's *Juditha Triumphans*, she then performed songs by Bottegari and Durante and two Bach arias. The musical highlight of the



Helen Phillips

program was reached with four songs by Clara Schumann and a Mendelssohn group. Miss Phillips revealed a firm grasp of lieder style here, setting forth distinctions of mood with considerable vocal subtlety. The ensuing group contained Milhaud's *Trois poèmes* de Jean Cocteau and a dramatically affecting performance of the *Adieu, forêts*, from Tchaikovsky's *Jeanne d'Arc*. Miss Phillips closed with arrangements of Negro songs, including settings by Gail Kubik and William Grant Still. She was accompanied by Kelley Wyatt, and Josef Marx was the assisting oboist.

—C. B.

### Helen Brainard, Pianist Town Hall, March 17 (Debut)

Helen Brainard, a native of Massachusetts, chose an ambitious program for her New York debut recital. Like many young contemporary pianists, she seemed to be more at home in modern works than she was in the Beethoven C minor Sonata, Op. 111, or in the Schumann Kreisleriana. The young pianist did her best playing in Boris Koutzen's *Eidolons*, a Poem for Piano based on a verse of Walt Whitman, of which she gave the first performance. The work is well thought out; it is pianistically effective, and, although there are traces of Prokofiev and Ives in it, it is original. It has in it, too, a good "walking-tune" à la Grainger. The piece begins quietly, builds up to a thrilling climax, and ends as it began. Miss Brainard played *Eidolons* with a fine singing tone in the lyrical passages; she put fire into her climax, and her rhythms were free and easy. Equally fiery and rhythmic was her performance of Prokofiev's Seventh Sonata.

—R. K.

### Frank Amey, Pianist Town Hall, March 18 (Debut)

Frank Amey, a member of the composers' section of the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood, presented a program of major piano works, including a three-movement Sonata of his own. Everything in this program was not only played with a composer's comprehension of content, form, style and historical perspective, but with a dazzling virtuosic command of the keyboard as well.

Mr. Amey opened and closed his recital with two sonatas that have much in common, Scriabin's Fifth and his own. The latter proved to be a compelling work, brilliant, taut, thoroughly pianistic, and, despite the harmonic influence of Scriabin and Charles Ives, original. The final movement, based on a march-like theme, bristles with all sorts of pianistic devices calculated to astonish. Mr. Amey's hands seemed to be all over the keyboard at once, hurling flying scales and thundering tone clusters around with frenzied rhythms, yet the pianist appeared to be as cool as a cucumber throughout the proceedings. All was not thunder and lightning, however, for Mr. Amey was just as persuasive and understanding an interpreter of Bach's Partita No. 2 and Beethoven's E major Sonata, Op. 109, as he was of Scriabin and himself.

—R. K.

### Rey de la Torre, Guitarist Town Hall, March 19

Works ranging from pre-classic to modern made up the attractive program of Rey de la Torre. The noted classical guitarist offered two Pavares by Luis Milán, Tiento by Miguel de Fuenllana, a Gagliarda and Allemande by John Dowland, and Six Pieces by Robert de Visée in his first group, playing them with excellent grasp of their modal and contrapuntal style. The de Visée offered a rather sedate series of movements based on dance forms. All were played with an intimacy and tonal charm that were beguiling. The first complete performance here of a Sonata, Op. 15, by Mauro Giuliani, and an Introduction. Theme and Variations by Fernando Sor were of great interest, particularly the latter master's writing, so idiomatic for the guitar. This group offered further examples of Mr. de la Torre's exquisite and evocative musical readings.

The closing half was given over to modern Spanish masters, including three Catalonian Melodies by Miguel Llobet, of atmospheric and earthy charm; *Ecos del Paisaje* and *Vidala* from *Evocaciones Criollas* by Alfonso Broqua, also of folkish suggestion and descriptive power; Falla's *Romance del Pescador* and *Canción del Fuego* Fatuo from *El Amor Brujo*, and Albéniz's *Leyenda*. The long list of encores included an especially beautiful reading of Granados' *Playera*, in which the performance had a wider dynamic range and included some con-

summative playing of harmonics. The audience was large and well disposed to applause.

—R. M. K.

### Robert Goldsand, Pianist Town Hall, March 20, 3 p.m.

For his second recital this season, Robert Goldsand presented an interesting and varied array of works under the title *Great Concert Etudes* for the Piano. Liszt's *Paysage*, Henselt's *If I were a Bird*, and eight Chopin etudes comprised the first group. Mr. Goldsand's playing of these was uneven. Some, like the Chopin Etudes in A minor, Op. 10, No. 2, and the G sharp minor—in thirds, from Op. 25, were marvels of feathery lightness and poetry while others, like the lovely Henselt, were rushed and further marred by false accents and explosive dynamic contrasts.

In his second group, devoted to etudes by Debussy, Szymanowski, Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, and Scriabin, the virtuoso reigned supreme. His playing of the Szymanowski Etude in B flat minor, Op. 4, No. 3, was as notable for its emotional intensity as it was for its technical excellence. The way he kept the bitter melody in octaves singing in the right hand against the wondrously shaded slithering scales in the left was virtuosity with a vengeance.

He played with the utmost refinement and beauty of tone the beautiful and fiendishly difficult Chopin-Godowsky Etude in E flat minor, Op. 10, No. 6, for the left hand alone. In the climax of the afternoon, Schumann's *Symphonic Etudes* were presented on a grand scale. Here were fire and delicacy, poetry and passion, lyricism and virtuosity delivered with commanding authority.

—R. K.

### Stuart Fastofsky, Violinist Carnegie Hall, March 20

The young and talented violinist Stuart Fastofsky returned to Carnegie Hall this year with a program devoted to the unfamiliar and the new. Let it be said at the outset that he is sufficiently secure in his technique and persuasive as a musician to do just that without taking the risk that his audience will become uneasy or inattentive. There were four first performances in all—his own Variations on a Theme of Paganini, a Duetto Fiorentino by Paganini himself, a Suite by Richard Oliver, and a

sonata written in 1944 by the Dutch composer Hans Henkemans. Mr. Fastofsky's variations on the theme of Paganini's 24th Caprice (a common vehicle for other composers) were rather academic but provided for ample virtuosic display. The Duetto Fiorentino is one of six pieces similarly titled and published only two years ago. Though demanding, it proved to be melodically winning and nicely contrasted in its two movements. The Oliver Suite, in which the composer was the accompanist, is constructed on Latin-American themes and is pleasant enough, while being rather superficially derivative of this style.

Easily the most interesting of the new works in Mr. Fastofsky's program was the Henkemans Sonata. This is one of those pieces, rare in contemporary instrumental literature, that seems tailor-made for the combination of instruments it uses. It also impresses as a sincere work, the musical ideas being worked out in poetic and deeply-felt emotional terms. It is a work capable of "interpretation," and one listener was satisfied that Mr. Fastofsky knew what he was doing. There were also works by Stravinsky (*Duo Concertant*), Suk, Kochanski, Szymanowski, and Prokofiev, as well as a lively Presto by Fastofsky. The violinist appears to be growing in musical maturity; one is curious to hear him in a program of more traditional fare. Peter Howard was the accompanist on this occasion.

—C. B.

### Paul Gurevich, Violinist Town Hall, March 21, 5:30

Paul Gurevich, accompanied by Brooks Smith, again made an agreeable impression in this, his second, Town Hall recital, playing a program compounded chiefly of pre-nineteenth-century works. They were Handel's Sonata in E major; Beethoven's Sonata in E flat, Op. 12, No. 3; Mozart's Concerto No. 4 in D major; Bach's Sonata in A minor for unaccompanied violin, and the perennial Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso of Saint-Saëns. Mr. Gurevich's violin tone was clear-grained, his playing at all times articulate. His readings were forthright and carried weight for the most part, but did not always suggest personal involvement on the artist's part. Mr. Gurevich was anything but casual in his approach, but he sometimes seemed to miss the essential spirit of a particular work, as in the Mozart.

(Continued on page 26)

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# New Music Reviews

## Rhapsody for Orchestra By George Perle

From Louisville, Ky., comes the score of George Perle's *Rhapsody for Orchestra*, commissioned by the Louisville Orchestra. The work is issued by Pikaron Music Publishers, Inc. It contains a note at the end, presumably in the composer's handwriting: Louisville, Kentucky, Sept. 10, 1953. Performance time: 10'.

Nothing that has happened in American music for many years has been more auspicious than the decentralization that has been effected through the establishment of musical departments in universities, the appointment of distinguished composers as teachers of composers-in-residence, the holding of festivals of contemporary music, and the commissioning of works by organizations and orchestras. The Louisville Orchestra has set a happy example in this respect both in music and in the dance, and it is a profound pleasure to receive a new work, commissioned, published, and performed in Louisville for the first time anywhere.

New York, like Paris and London, will probably always be the focus of national artistic life, but it should not dominate endeavor and activity to the detriment of the rest of the nation. People in Kansas should be able to keep up with the times, artistically, just as readily as people in New York. The Rockefeller Foundation made one of its wisest moves in enabling the Louisville Orchestra to become an important patron of contemporary music and dance.

When Perle's *Rhapsody for Orchestra* was first played on Jan. 16, 1954, by the Louisville Orchestra, his program note explained the selection of its title: "In the present instance the title was suggested by the ambiguity of formal function of many of the thematic elements, by the concentration into a single movement of several lines of development, and by the interlacing throughout the work of expositive, elaborative, and recapitulative procedures (instead of distinct sections emphasizing each of the formal divisions, as in the classical sonata-form for example)."

If this sounds forbiddingly intellectual for a piece entitled *Rhapsody*, I should hasten to point out that the work actually possesses considerable expressive power and is in no sense a musical blueprint. As the composer himself adds in his note: "Although formal details are most easily verbal-

ized, they are always secondary to other aspects of the total musical complex: harmonic direction; tonality; the interrelation of elements associated horizontally, or successively, with elements associated vertically, or simultaneously. The traditional assumptions regarding these matters have been profoundly questioned in the work of Arnold Schönberg, which has had a large influence upon my own musical thinking."

Perle's *Rhapsody*, like so much of Schönberg's music, is not difficult to follow, even though it may sound fearfully involved in verbal analyses or descriptions. It is transparently scored, and, for all its changes of meter, rhythmically propulsive to a commendable degree. To judge by the score, it is more notable for its lucidity of organization and emotional drive than for the musical materials themselves. Occasionally, as at the beginning, it is almost lusciously romantic, for a moment or two. In each of its two parts, separated by a pause, the sense and direction of the musical discourse are plain. Above all, it challenges the mind and the imagination.

—R. S.

## Newsom Oratorio Sung in Baltimore

BALTIMORE:—On April 4, at Emmanuel Church, Hugh Raymond Newsom's *The Divine Tragedy*, called an oratorio of Christ's Passion, had its first public performance. Dedicated to the composer's father, the work was completed in Hollywood ten years ago. The text is drawn entirely from the Scriptures.

The *Divine Tragedy* is in five books, and embraces the last days of Christ, opening with the Entry into Jerusalem. The remaining four parts are the Last Supper, Gethsemane, the Trial Before Pilate, and the Crucifixion at Golgotha.

The six soloists were William Chalmers, baritone, the Voice of Christ; Harvey Smith-Spencer, tenor, St. Matthew, the Narrator; Fraser

William Schuman (left), judge in the competition, discusses plans for the 1954 Student Composers Radio Awards and the newly founded Seventeen Music Award, Enid A. Haupt, publisher of *Seventeen Magazine*, and Carl Haverlin, president of Broadcast Music, Inc.



## Magazine and BMI Sponsor Competition

Enid A. Haupt, publisher of *Seventeen*, has announced the Seventeen Music Award providing for the recording of a winning composition by a student composer under the age of 21. This will be incorporated in the Student Composers Radio Awards sponsored by Broadcast Music, Inc., which for the third year offers \$7,500 in scholarships and subsistence prizes to student composers in the United States and Canada. The latter award was established in 1951 by BMI in co-operation with state associations of

broadcasters, music educators, and composers.

Judges for the 1954 SCRA and Seventeen awards are William Schuman, composer and president of the Juilliard School of Music; Earl V. Moore, dean, school of music, University of Michigan; and Henry Cowell, of the faculty of Peabody Conservatory and president of the American Composers Alliance. The competition closes next Dec. 31, and winners will be announced before June 1, 1955.

Information and entry material may be obtained by writing to Director, SCRS, Broadcast Music, Inc., 580 Fifth Ave., New York 36, N. Y.

Gange, bass, Pilate; Matt Thomas, basso profundo, a Chief Priest; Anatol Grossheff, basso profundo, a Thief; and Olga Grether, contralto, a Voice of Lamentation. Twelve male solo voices sang the words of the various disciples. The large chorus was divided into various groups: Celestial Voices (women); the Multitude (mixed); Priests and Scribes (basses); Soldiers and Rabble (men). Originally scored for full orchestra, the composer made a special arrangement for organ, strings, woodwinds, and harp. D. DeWitt

Wasson was the organist, and Marjorie Newsom the harpist. The composer conducted.

The work takes three hours to perform. The premiere began at 5 p.m., and there was a break of an hour for supper.

There are many moments of great beauty in *The Divine Tragedy*, and the soloists gave creditable performances. It is a work that is obviously deeply religious in its conception, as well as sincerely written. But a work of such length, in order to be practicable, must frequently change its pace and idiom.

The first three parts are mostly written in a simple accompanied recitative. Relief should have come through the joyousness of the multitude as Christ entered Jerusalem, or the eagerness with which the Disciples questioned their Lord as to the betrayal, or the derisive scorn of the rabble in the garden of Gethsemane. Instead, there was hardly a noticeable change of either tempo or mood, and not nearly enough dynamic variety. More orchestral color would have underscored the text to greater advantage. On the other hand, the Voice of Lamentation, magnificently sung by Miss Grether, and the Seraphic Voices commenting on the action were as welcome as they were needed.

The last two parts, the Trial and Crucifixion, had frequent interpolations by the choruses, yet they still lacked the realism of a vicious mob, out to kill the Man they hated. However, the last chorus, For God so loved the world, builds to a climax that is beautifully poignant, the most solid and believable one in the oratorio. —GEORGE KENT BELLOWES

## First Performances in New York Concerts

### Operas

Copland, Aaron: *The Tender Land* (New York City Opera, April 1)  
Giannini, Vittorio: *The Taming of the Shrew* (NBC-TV Opera Theatre, March 13)

### Orchestral Works

Giannini, Vittorio: *Symphony in one movement* (Manhattan Orchestra, March 26)  
Kraft, Leo: *Concerto Grosso*, for flute, clarinet, trumpet and strings (Music in the Making, March 28)  
Luening, Otto: *Wisconsin Suite* (Music in the Making, March 28)  
Saeverud, Harald: *Divertimento No. 1*, for flute and string orchestra (Twentieth Century Concert Hall, March 21)  
Yardumian, Richard: *Armenian Suite* (Philadelphia Orchestra, March 16)

### Chamber Works

Bingham, Seth: *Connecticut Suite*, for organ and strings (Lenten Evenings of Music, March 29)  
Bowles, Paul: *A Picnic Cantata*, for four women's voices, two pianos, and percussion (Gold and Fisdale, March 23)  
Donovan, Richard: *Quartet for Woodwinds* (Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble, March 14)  
Leibowitz, René: *Duo for Cello and Piano* (ISCM concert, March 28)  
Overton, Hall: *String Quartet No. 2* (Composers Forum, March 20)  
Ratner, Leonard: *Serenade for oboe, horn, and string quartet* (Composers Forum, March 20)  
Rosen, Jerome: *Sonata for Clarinet and Cello* (Circle-in-the-Square, March 28)  
Schuller, Gunther: *Five Pieces for Five Horns* (ISCM concert, March 28)

### Violin Works

Aitkin, Hugh: *Fantasy* (David Davis, March 24)  
Fastovsky, Stuart: *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* (Stuart Fastovsky, March 20)  
Henkemans, Hans: *Sonata* (1944) (Stuart Fastovsky, March 20)

Oliver, Richard: *Suite* (Stuart Fastovsky, March 20)  
Paganini, Niccolò: *Duetto Fiorentino* (Stuart Fastovsky, March 20)  
Ratner, Leonard: *Sonata* (Composers Forum, March 20)

### Piano Works

Amey, Frank: *Sonata* (Frank Amey, March 18)  
Bacevicius, Vytautas: *Sonata*, Op. 53, No. 4 (Vytautas Bacevicius, March 13)  
Boscovich: *From the Semitic Suite* (Ella Goldstein, March 25)  
Flood, Dora Flick: *No. 3 from Patterns in Flight* (Sidney Raphael, March 28)  
Fomenko: *Prelude in A flat* (Christine Chvartazky, March 28)  
Korestchenko: *Aveu*, Op. 40, No. 3 (Christine Chvartazky, March 28)  
Koutzen, Boris: *Eidolons* (Helen Brainard, March 17)  
Lipschutz, Lita: *Three Episodes* (New York Philharmonic-Symphony, March 20)  
Poulenc, Francis: *Sonata* (1953) (Gold and Fisdale, March 23)  
Revutsky: *Sonata in E minor* (Christine Chvartazky, March 28)  
Semmler, Alexander: *Suite*, Op. 5 (Sidney Raphael, March 28)  
Urbent, Jacques: *Pensive Child* (Sidney Raphael, March 28)

### Songs

Bernstein, Leonard: *Silhouette in Galilee* (Jennie Toured, March 14)  
Bliss, Arthur: *The Enchantress* (Margaret Phillips, March 11)  
Duke, John: *In the Fields* (Paul Krueger, March 31)  
Helps, Robert: *Two Songs* (ISCM concert, March 28)  
Shifrin, Seymour: *Three Songs* (ISCM concert, March 28)  
Webern, Anton: *Five Religious Texts* (ISCM concert, March 28)

### Choral Works

Wright, Searle: *Academic Festival Te Deum* (Twentieth Century Concert Hall, March 28)

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# Composers Corner

Winter Watts was honored on his seventieth birthday by the National Association of American Composers and Conductors, with a program of his songs at the New York Public Library on March 13 . . . Works by Tom Scott were heard in a concert at the Museum of Modern Art on March 11 . . . Excerpts from the Semitic Suite by A. U. Bos-covich were played for the first time in New York by Ella Goldstein on the 25th at the YM & YWHA.

The Dutch-born composer and conductor David Broekman has been named winner of the year's Alice M. Ditson Award, granted through the Ditson Fund at Columbia University for "distinguished service to American music." Mr. Broekman's particular contribution has been as initiator and conductor of the Music in the Making concerts given at Cooper Union . . . Columbia has commissioned Henry Brant to compose a work reflecting the university's Bicentennial theme, Man's Right to Knowledge and the Free Use Thereof . . . Allan Hovhaness is writing a two-piano concerto for the duo-pianists Appleton and Field.

The Theodore Presser Company presented a concert of contemporary music from its catalogue on March 12 in Philadelphia. The composers represented were Ilhan Usmanbas, Jean Berger, Marshall Bialosky, and John Verrall . . . Eugene Ormandy led the Philadelphia Orchestra in the radio performance of Eugene Zador's Elegie and Dance in a CBS radio broadcast on March 20 . . . The Mexican composer-pianist Orlando Otey was heard in a program, including two of his own compositions, on March 16 at Merion, Penna.

Items in the field of opera include a new work by John Gardner based on Somerset Maugham's The Moon and Sixpence, which Sadler's Wells Theatre is planning to present in London late next year; and a projected New York production of an opera by Raffaello de Banfield, Lord Byron's Love Letters, using a text by Tennessee Williams . . . Richard Mohaupt has been commissioned by the Louisville Symphony to write a one-act opera, Double Trouble, as it is called, will receive its premiere in October . . . Arthur Kreutz, now on the faculty of the University of Mis-

issippi music department, recently conducted a performance of his University Greys, a ballad opera of Civil War days . . . A new operetta, Jack and the Beanstalk, by Marlon Ohlson was presented in the final Fun With Music program at the Brooklyn Academy on March 27.

The first American performance of Jean Langlois's Missa in Simplicitate was given by the Canterbury Choral Society in New York on March 21 . . . Milton Katims led the Brooklyn Community Symphony in the first performance of Darius Milhaud's Concertino d'Hiver for Angular Trombone and String Orchestra on the 28th. (The work completes the composer's cycle of seasonal concertos.) Davis Shuman as the trombone soloist . . . Milhaud's Liturgie Jewish liturgy, was one of the new works heard in a program presented by the Jewish Music Forum in New York on the 29th. The other was the American premiere of Shirei Rachel by the Israeli composer Abraham Daus . . . The Sacred Service of Ernest Bloch was sung at Central Synagogue on March 7.

## Contests

CATHOLIC MUSIC EDUCATORS SCHOLARSHIP. Auspices: National Catholic Music Educators Association. Open to Roman Catholic high-school and college seniors. Scholarships valued at \$8,000, and \$2,000 in cash awards.

CHOIR CONDUCTORS' GUILD ANTHEM CONTEST. Auspices: Capital University Chapel Choir Conductors' Guild. Deadline: Sept. 1. Address: Everett W. Mehrley, Mees Conservatory, Capital University, Columbus 9, Ohio.

FRIENDS OF HARVEY GAUL COMPOSITION CONTEST. Auspices: The Friends of Harvey Gaul, Inc. For a violin and piano work, and a work for four harps. Open to any United States composer. Awards: \$300 and \$100, respectively. Deadline: Dec. 1. Address: Mrs. David V. Murdoch, 5914 Wellesley Ave., Pittsburgh 6, Penn.

HARPISTS' ASSOCIATION COMPOSITION CONTEST. Auspices: Northern California Harpists' Association. For two works for solo harp, or harp in a solo capacity with one or more instruments or voices. Open to composers of any nationality. Awards: \$150 each. Deadline: Jan. 15, 1955. Address: Yvonne LaMothe, 687 Grizzly Peak Blvd., Berkeley 8, Calif.

A Rome Prize Fellowship in musical composition has been awarded to Billy Layton, of Cambridge, Mass., currently a student at the Harvard University Graduate School . . . William Blankenship, tenor, is recipient of this year's operatic fellowship awarded by the National Arts Foundation . . . Craig Timberlake, bass, has been named winner of the seventh annual American Theatre Wing Concert Award and will be presented in a New York debut under Wing auspices later this spring.

Harriet Serr and Naomi Weiss were chosen as New York State winners in the Steinway Centennial competition for young American pianists sponsored by the National Federation of Music Clubs . . . Van Cliburn, pianist, of Shreveport, La., is winner of the fifteenth annual competition for the Edgar M. Leventritt Award . . . Clarence Cameron White was named winner of the 1953-54 Benjamin Award for Tranquil Music last month

following the premiere of his prize-winning work, a nine-minute Elegy, by the New Orleans Philharmonic-Symphony.

Lita Lipschutz, a first-year student at the Juilliard School of Music, has received first prize in the sixth annual young composers' contest of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Young People's Concerts Committee. The winning work, her Three Episodes for Piano, received its first performance at the season's final young people's concert on March 20 . . . Arthur Lange has been awarded the 1953 Northern California Harpists' Association Award for his Arabesque, Concerto for harp and orchestra. Mr. Lange is conductor of the Santa Monica Symphony.

## Metropolitan Auditions Name Four Winners

The Metropolitan Opera Auditions of the Air produced four award-winners this year, doubling the number of young singers chosen for this honor over past years. The four winners were Marjorie Catherine McClung, soprano, of San Antonio, and Albert de Costa, tenor, from Long Island, both of whom won \$1,500 and scholarships to the Katherine Long School in New York; Louis Sgarro, a bass baritone from Corona, N. Y., who received \$500 and a Metropolitan Opera contract for the 1954-55 season; and Christina C. Cardillo, soprano, of North Adams, Mass., who won \$500 and a scholarship to the Katherine Long School. The sixteenth annual awards ceremonies were heard over the American Broadcasting Company network in a special program on April 6. Each of the winners received his award from Rudolf Bing, general manager of the Metropolitan, and then sang with an orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf, of the Metropolitan music staff.

## City Opera

(Continued from page 8)

into the oven. It was a tribute to a characterization of droll villainy. Vocally, the role of the Witch being what it is (or what the chameleon-voiced Miss Russell made it), there remained some doubt whether the question raised by the soprano's well-known recording, Anna Russell Sings?, should be answered in the affirmative or negative. Chalk it up as a most auspicious debut, all in all.

The talented young conductor Thomas Schippers gave the opera a handsome performance. Perhaps the Dream Pantomime was taken at a pace more suitable to the Valkyries than to fourteen angels; otherwise this awkward scene was handled with remarkable success, and Jean Rosenthal's lighting gave it the colors of a Venetian painting. Rosalind Nadell and Adelaide Bishop made Hansel and Gretel fetching, and Mary Krete was particularly good as the Mother.

—F. M.

### Tosca, April 4

Mary Curtis, who recently made her debut with this opera company in Don Giovanni, sang her first Tosca in the New York City Opera's first performance of the Puccini opera this season. Miss Curtis was, in general, quite strong on the vocal side: the high C's in the second act gave her no trouble at all, and her singing carried most splendidly the "big line" of the opera. Her impersonation of Tosca seemed well considered, and it was not without choreographic stylishness, but Miss Curtis might do well to realize that in a small house like the City Center a good deal of facial gymnastics can be dispensed with. Jon Crain, who sang Mario, was in unusually fine voice; and Walter Cassel was the Scarpia. Norman Treigle was splendidly authoritative as Angelotti.

The rest of the cast included Luigi Velluci, Emile Renan, Arthur Newman, Teresa Gannon, and Thomas Powell. Julius Rudel conducted.

—W. F.

## OTHER PERFORMANCES

The initial ten days of the current New York City Opera season saw the revival of three works in addition to those reviewed above. They were a Fledermaus on March 27, a Don Giovanni on the 28th, both evening performances, and a Cenerentola on the evening of April 3. The first-named served the company as the occasion on which to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its first performance on Feb. 21, 1944. Three former members of the City Opera Company, Regina Resnik, Ramon Vinay, and Norman Scott, all of whom have since joined the Metropolitan Opera, returned as "surprise" guests of Prince Orlofsky during the second act of the Strauss opera. The house lights were partly turned up as each alumnus sang an aria. Another feature of this Fledermaus was the debut with the company of Gloria Lind in the role of Rosalinda.

Mary Curtis made her City Center debut the following evening's Don Giovanni, singing the role of Donna Anna. Madeline Chambers appeared as Zerlina for the first time with the company.

Three singers made first appearances in their respective roles in the Cenerentola of April 3. They were Donald Gramm as Dandini, John Drury as Prince Ramiro, and Rosalind Nadell as Tisbe.

## Carmen To Open Salmaggy Open-Air Opera

The Popular Price Grand Opera Company, Alfredo Salmaggy, director, will open its seventh open-air season at Randall's Island on June 5 with a new production of Carmen.

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## Recitals in New York

(Continued from page 23)

That he can play the violin, he left no doubt, particularly with the closing Saint-Saëns piece, but he could have achieved greater stylistic variety in the course of his program.

—C. B.

### Claire Barlow, Soprano Carnegie Recital Hall, March 22

Claire Barlow, a young New York soprano, made her local debut, singing a program that might have taxed the veteran recitalist. The real tests of what one immediately discovered to be an extremely facile coloratura voice came with her singing of the Mad Scene from Thomas's Hamlet and Mozart's concert aria No. 10, che non sei capace. Miss Barlow handled these pieces with confidence and winning vocalism. Her voice may still lack maturity and her focusing of tones may sometimes falter in passing from one register to another, but her singing was consistently clear, bright, and effortless, even in the extreme high range. To say that an artist has promise often leaves too much to the imagination, but we should certainly hear more from Miss Barlow. Her accompanist was Stuart Ross.

—A. R.

### Nancy Silsbee, Pianist Town Hall, March 22

Nancy Silsbee presented a program of keyboard works by a quartet of composers related in spirit if not in time in this recital. A Pachelbel Magnificat, Bach's Partita in E minor and his Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, two pieces by Couperin, the Forlane from Ravel's Le tombeau de Couperin and his Alborado del Gracioso were her offerings. Just what the Alborado's place was in relation to the eighteenth-century or eighteenth-century-inspired works was not clear. It sounded incongruous in the program, and Miss Silsbee seemed to have trouble with its technical difficulties, nor did she seem to comprehend its Spanish flavor. Elsewhere in the program, however, she displayed a sympathetic understanding of the music and translated the harpsichord pieces effectively and in good taste to the medium of the piano. She played with the sensitivity to tonal values and good phrasing and with the terraced dynamics that the music demanded, but with too little contrast in tempos.

—R. K.

### Gold and Fildale, Duo-pianists Town Hall, March 23

Having arranged about as intriguing a program as possible for their fourth Town Hall recital, Arthur Gold and Robert Fildale proceeded to play it with truly exceptional musicianship. Their distinction arose not from a crack precision in rhythmic matters but from a unity of style—in phrasing, dynamics, texture, and color. The constantly lovely tone, variety of touch, musical give and take, and discriminating use of sonorities were such that at the end of the program there was not the surfeit of piano tone and rhythmic monotony that are too frequently the bane of two-piano recitals.

The program brought two premieres, the first New York performance of Francis Poulenc's Sonata (1953), written for Gold and Fildale, and the first performance anywhere of Paul Bowles's A Picnic Cantata (1954), also composed for the artists. Besides these there were such choice items as Hindemith's Sonata (1938), Debussy's Six épigraphes antiques (1915), and Weber's beguiling Four Pieces, Op. 60.

The Poulenc Sonata alternates experiments in sonorities with several of the bittersweet café-like tunes that are so characteristic of the composer. If the mixture seems pretty much as

before, there are no complaints from this corner; the mixture is still thoroughly engaging.

A Picnic Cantata is scored for four women's voices, two pianos, and percussion. The text by James Schuyler consists of a series of conversations carried on by four girls who drive out to the country for a picnic one Sunday. Very deftly the author incorporates clichés into a pseudo-naïve style for satirical effect. The touch is



Gold  
and  
Fildale

very light, never trivial. Bowles has composed a rhythmic foundation and musical comment of almost Oriental delicacy for the instruments, and the text is set with sensitivity and sly humor. The result has a smiling, innocent charm that avoids oversweetness or preciousness. There should be more opportunities to hear and enjoy the score.

The singers, who performed with winning simplicity and good spirits, were Martha Flowers and Gloria Davy, sopranos; Merida Gaither, mezzo-soprano; and Gloria Wynder, contralto. Alfred Howard's percussion playing was a miracle of timing and control.

—R. A. E.

### Rudolf Serkin, Pianist Carnegie Hall, March 23

Mr. Serkin's all-Beethoven recital, originally scheduled for Dec. 1 but postponed because of illness, was the pianist's only solo recital here this season. More relaxed and less nervously tense than he had been in recent orchestral appearances, Mr. Serkin was also more introspective and less flamboyant in his playing on this occasion.

Evidently conserving his energies for the main business of the evening, the Diabelli Variations, Op. 120, Mr. Serkin approached the Pathétique and the A major (Op. 101) sonatas in what was for him a rather gingerly fashion. In the Vivace alla Marcia of the A major, he concentrated on the Marcia to the exclusion of the Vivace, and what the movement gained in breadth thereby it lost in momentum. It was not until he came to the fugue of this sonata that Mr. Serkin's playing began to catch its customary fire.

Perhaps the best tribute to Mr. Serkin's masterly performance of the Diabelli Variations was the fact that he held a capacity Carnegie Hall audience spellbound throughout the 55 minutes it took him to play the work. This was no mean feat considering that the variations are as difficult to listen to as they are to play. The listenability was enhanced by the pianist's intense concentration on, and observance of, every minute indication in the Urtext score. Yet, this was no cut-and-dried academic performance. Every note had the breath of life in it and the playing generated its own kind of magnetic spell. The brilliant variations were masterly examples in the art of bravura playing, and No. 28 was dashed off with Mr. Serkin's own special kind of frenzied abandon. But what made this recital truly memorable were his deeply moving and hauntingly beautiful performances of the Fughetta and the slow-moving variations.

—R. K.

(Continued on page 27)



# Recitals in New York

(Continued from page 26)

## Bach Aria Group Carnegie Hall, March 24

The Bach Aria Group, William H. Scheide, director, was joined by the Robert Shaw Chorale in its final concert of the season, at Carnegie Hall, with Mr. Shaw serving as guest conductor. His program, of course, was devoted to the works of Bach, and the manner in which it was performed reflected his sincerity as a musician and his ability as a choral director to infuse his performances of this music with a large measure of religious intensity. The evening opened with the Cantata No. 42, Am Abend aber desselbigen Sabbats, and closed with No. 41, Jesu, nun sei gepreiset. Bridging these two works were arias from cantatas 82, 129, 94, 89, and 97, and the title chorus. Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal, from the 41st Cantata. The regular members of the Bach Aria Group—vocal soloists Eileen Farrell, Carol Smith, Jan Peerce, and Norman Farrow; and instrumentalists Julius Baker, flute; Robert Bloom, oboe; Maurice Wilk, violin; and Bernard Greenhouse, cello—had the assistance of Max Hollander, violin, and the oboists Harry Shulman and Earl Schuster. Though each is a recognized artist in his own right and made individual contributions of great merit, their collaboration in the ensemble pieces afforded a rare example of carefully controlled, balanced, and musically integrated working together.

—C. B.

## David Davis, Violinist Town Hall, March 24 (Debut)

Twenty-one-year-old David Davis gave a Town Hall debut recital of considerable merit. The program included Suite Italienne by Stravinsky-Pergolesi; Kreutzer Sonata by Beethoven; Sonata in E by Hindemith; short works by Fauré, Scriabin-Szigeti, and Paganini-Kreisler; and the first performance of Hugh Aitkin's Fantasy. Young Mr. Davis performed with a sturdy, if rather metallic, tone, and he demonstrated a technique that was, for the most part, secure indeed. His approach to a work like the Kreutzer Sonata was essentially high-minded, if rather cool in its intellectuality. However, the playing, for all of this, was anything but dull. David Garvey was the accompanist.

—W. F.

## Suzanne Kales, Pianist Town Hall, March 25

This young pianist, who has appeared as soloist with the New York City Symphony under Franz Bibo, was assisted in the Mozart Concerto in E flat major, K. 271, by a chamber orchestra under that conductor's direction. This was one of the most effective performances, at least in the slow movement, that Miss Kales provided during her program. She was able to produce a large tone and to surmount the ensemble. However, she showed a tendency to overstress dynamics. There were evidences of a natural feeling for expression and musicianly shaping of phrases, but she had not solved problems of proportion and balance in her presentations completely. Solo works in the program were by Bach, Haydn, Schumann, Chopin, and Liszt.

—R. M. K.

## Henri Deering, Pianist Town Hall, March 26

Piano playing that reflected the charm and graciousness of the performer and that was always a joy to the ear characterized Henri Deering's recital. Like a genial host, he had, too, the happy faculty of making his audience feel at home. His unassuming air at the keyboard and his ability to make a piano sound enchanting in his own intimate way added up to a delightful evening of music making.

Opening with the Bach-Liszt Prelude and Fugue in A minor, Mr. Deering produced sonorities suggestive rather than imitative of the organ. He followed this with just about the most magical performance of Mendelssohn's Variations sérieuses that I have ever heard. This was piano playing in the romantic tradition at its finest.

Sensuous beauty of tone and a gentle persuasiveness marked his playing of short pieces by Poulenc, Ravel, Fauré, and Debussy. Mr. Deering succeeded, too, in bringing out the poetic and seductive elements in several Chopin works.

—R. K.

## Myra Hess, Pianist Carnegie Hall, March 27 (3:00)

For her final New York appearance this season, Myra Hess chose an all-Beethoven program containing the

(Continued on page 28)



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Mrs. W. T. Colquitt, co-chairman of membership for the Shreveport, La., Community concert Association, presents Arthur Fiedler, conductor of the Boston Pops Tour Orchestra, with a jar of black-eyed peas, a Southern favorite, in exchange for one of Boston baked beans. (Photograph by Bill Alexander, Shreveport Times)

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## Recitals in New York

(Continued from page 27)

monumental Sonatas Op. 109, 110, and 111. These are works for which Dame Myra has shown a particular affinity in the past, and her performances in this recital were invested with the conviction and maturity of thought that an artist can achieve only through years of familiarity and renewed study. There are many pianists with formidable techniques who, in attempting these sonatas, devote their interpretative faculties to scaling the epic heights that define the scope of Beethoven's genius. Dame Myra, however, is one of the very few who commands the expressive range to realize the full grandeur of this music without having to over-extend or reach for the seemingly impossible. Her playing on this Saturday afternoon was, as always, self-assured and quietly forceful. The capacity audience was justified in its not so quiet enthusiasm at the concert's end.

—C. B.

### Sidney Rafael, Pianist Town Hall, March 28

Sidney Rafael's playing in this recital was marked by musical sensitivity and a general freshness of manner that were in themselves ingratiating. His performances also revealed an incisive rhythmic sense that kept things moving even when certain technical demands proved too formidable. The program was itself a little more ambitious than this pianist might have attempted, the traditional items being Haydn's Variations in F minor, Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, a Chopin group, including the F minor Ballade, and Liszt's E major Polonaise. Mr. Rafael often solved the problem of an uncertain technique by taking slow tempos over the rough spots, but he was usually careful not to weaken the dynamic momentum of his playing. The final moments of the Bach fugue had considerable power. The program also contained three novelties—Alexander Semmler's Suite for Piano, Op. 5, Jacques Urbert's Pensive Child, and Dora Flick Flood's Patterns in Flight, No. 3. With the possible exception of the Semmler work, these pieces do not reflect any particular originality of thought or of materials. Semmler's Opus 5 is skillfully written for the pianist who can handle its florid style, but its total effect is one of ponderousness and lack of clear design.

—C. B.

### William McGrath, Tenor Town Hall, March 28, 5:30 (Debut)

This gifted young tenor sang a Town Hall recital as winner of the sixth annual award sponsored by JUGG, Inc.; his program included songs and arias by Peri, Rosa, Stradella, Handel, Rameau, Debussy, Fourdrain, Vellones, Wolf, and others. Mr. McGrath is a singer imbued with admirable sensitivity, fine musical and interpretative intelligence, and a truly impressive modesty. His voice, in no way remarkable on its own account, sounded sweet, quite personal in quality; and it served the singer's every command. True, Mr. McGrath seemed more at home in the French repertory than he did the German, but any lack of taste, musicality, or seriousness he seemed quite incapable of. Stanley Sonntag was the accompanist.

—W. F.

### Wilhelm Backhaus, Pianist Carnegie Hall, March 30

Although he had not played in New York since 1926, Wilhelm Backhaus found a packed hall waiting eagerly to greet him at his recital, which was his only appearance here before he set off for a tour of Japan. During the intervening 28 years, his record-



Wilhelm Backhaus

ings have provided American music-lovers with a potent reminder of his artistic eminence. He is a world figure in music, and could probably sell out a house in Africa or Iceland as easily as he does in Tokyo or New York.

Mr. Backhaus played five Beethoven sonatas in this program: No. 8, in C minor, Op. 13 (Pathétique), No. 17, in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2; No. 26, in E flat major, Op. 81A (Les Adieux); No. 25, in G major, Op. 79; and No. 32, in C minor, Op. 111. He played each of them with the utmost simplicity, compounded of complete musical understanding and technical mastery. Beauty and good sense, musical logic and poetic vision were happily wedded in his interpretations. Although he had celebrated his seventieth birthday on March 26, four days before this concert, his powers were those of a man in the prime of life.

The most difficult things, such as the last pages of the Sonata, Op. 111, seemed easiest for Mr. Backhaus. The shimmering trills, the exquisitely phrased melody, the waves of sonority that he produced in the Arietta and Variations were effortless in their effect. The buoyant Sonata in G major, Op. 79, danced along as if the music were whirling the pianist along with it. Seldom does a performer achieve such ideal objectivity. It would be easy to continue with a catalogue of Mr. Backhaus' powers: the heroic style he evoked in the Handelian opening of the Pathétique Sonata; the tenderness and exultant joy in Les Adieux; the marvelously light yet rhythmically intoxicating finale of Op. 31, No. 2. Suffice it to urge the reader to watch carefully for his return to our shores. For he has the majesty and the humility of true genius.

—R. S.

### Paul Krueger, Bass-Baritone Town Hall, March 31 (Debut)

Paul Krueger, bass-baritone from North Dakota who has sung in oratorio and as soloist with the Houston and Fort Wayne orchestras and is teaching in the Juilliard School preparatory division, offered a well-chosen program including some relative rarities. The first group comprised the aria Heiligste Dreieinigkeit from Bach's Cantata No. 172; next, Winter Comes Slowly, from Purcell's The Fairy Queen; and the Air of Caron, from Lully's Alceste. Apparently hampered by nerves in his opening songs, and in Mozart's aria Per questa bella mano, K. 612, he came into greater freedom of expression in a Beethoven lieder group (Wonne der Wehmut, Andenken, Der Wachtelschlag, Mailied, and the Flea Song from Goethe's Faust). Though gifted with a substantial and pleasing voice in the upper range, Mr. Krueger

did not provide perfect breath support, and left lower tones unsupported, which sometimes made his intonation uncertain. In the Lamento from Honegger's La Danse des Morts, he showed sincerity of feeling. Final groups of American folksongs set by Ernst Bacon and John Edmunds, and songs by John Duke, Norman Dello Joio, and Samuel Barber included a premiere—Duke's In the Fields. Arpad Sandor was excellent at the piano.

—R. M. K.

### Barbieri Cancels Met Performances

Shortly before the Metropolitan broadcast of Norma on March 27 in which she was to have sung, Fedora Barbieri canceled all of her appearances for the remainder of the season, as well as all Metropolitan commitments for 1954-55, in order to return to Italy to undergo an operation for appendicitis complicated by pregnancy. This will be Miss Barbieri's second child; her first, Hugo, is nine years old.

Miss Barbieri was scheduled to sing in the opening-night performance at the Metropolitan next season. She had planned to divide her time between New York and Milan, appearing during the second half of the season at La Scala. Her child, however, is expected some time in October, and her prior commitments with La Scala preclude her returning to the United States before the fall of 1955.

### Telecast Opera Series Ends Season

Opera Cameos, a series of 26 telecasts over the Dumont network, will be brought to a close for the season with a 45-minute program devoted to Carmen. The telecasts, ordinarily thirty minutes long, are under the musical direction of Giuseppe Bamboshek, who prepares and conducts the scores. This is his second year in charge. Among the operas represented during the year have been La Fanciulla del West, La Serva Padrona, and Thais. The singers have included Nell Rankin, Regina Resnik, Eva Likova, Frank Guarrera, and Robert Rounseville, among others.

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## Burgin Conducts Boston Symphony; New Work Introduced by Read

**G**ARDNER READ, now a professor at the Boston University College of Music, conducted the first local performances of his dance symphony *The Temptation of St. Anthony* at the Boston Symphony concerts of March 19 and 20. With Charles Munch away on a late winter vacation, the remainder of the program was conducted by Richard Burgin. Soprano Anne English, a young graduate of the New England Conservatory, was soloist in the final movement of Mahler's Fourth Symphony.

*The Temptation of St. Anthony* represents enormous learning in the science of orchestration but little true expressive sense. The work has its good pages, such as the calmly harmonious Prelude, the mood-setting fantasy of Scene I, and the emotional finality of the concluding measures. The Dance of the Seven Deadly Sins and of Lucifer, for all its grinding dissonance, is powerfully menacing and about the only movement that really gets off the ground. Mr. Read seemed to be a capable conductor, and one may assume the performance was all that he desired. Composer, music, and reading met with a polite reception.

We have been fortunate these many years that Mr. Burgin is so devoted to the music of Mahler. Once again he directed the Fourth Symphony handsomely, and it emerged in a truly splendid performance. Though she might have been more secure in those difficult melodic intervals, Miss English sang admirably and, best of all, mustered the required sense of naivete for the part.

### Berlioz' Romeo

The most recent previous symphony concerts had been a fortnight before when Charles Munch presented the entire *Romeo and Juliet* Symphony of Berlioz, with the Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society forming the chorus and, as soloists, Mary Davenport, John McCollum, and Yi-Kwei Sze. G. Wallace Woodworth, as always, had prepared his chorus well, and the whole work went magnificently, a pleasure that New York experienced for itself a week later.

Choral work of a decidedly superior standard has been on the increase in these parts the past few years, and recent concerts have emphasized this happy state. One such was by the small and expert Alumni Chorus of the New England Conservatory, directed by Lorna Cooke de Varon at Jordan Hall on March 4. The execution was brilliant, and the program was remarkably unhackneyed. In addition to choruses of Bach, we heard three of Vaughan Williams' Tudor Portraits, the still fascinating Americana of Randall Thompson, and Irving Fine's rather contrived *The Hour Glass*.

Another example was forthcoming from the New England Preparatory Schools Music Festival Chorus, which, prepared by their individual music teachers, were at the last conducted by Wilfrid Pelletier on March 7 at Symphony Hall. The singers were assisted by an orchestra of Boston Symphony men and by Rose Bampton, Ernest McChesney, and Denis Harbour, all creditable soloists. The program brought music of Schütz and the Christmas and Easter portions of Handel's *Messiah*.

At the same time, in Harvard's Sanders Theatre, violinist Joseph Fuchs and his sister Lillian, violist, were presenting music of Bach, Mozart and Martinu—from the last of his Three Madrigals. Since the Fuchses

are highly estimable musicians as well as gifted technicians, this was an afternoon of thorough-going musical interest.

Sara Locke, a capable Boston pianist, gave her formal debut concert at Jordan Hall the same day.

A new and, to me, surprisingly childish Septet from Igor Stravinsky, was the highlight of the first concert to be given this season by the Creative Concerts Guild on March 9. Since it takes only about eleven minutes, this work was repeated immediately, but the second time through it sounded no better.

Leo Smit was heard in the *Etudes Symphoniques* of Schumann and in the first Boston hearings of his own *Fantasy: The Farewell*, and of Alexei Haieff's *Five Pieces*. Both works are rhythmic-percussive, not notably in what is usually regarded as pianistic style.

Beveridge Webster returned to Jordan Hall on March 16 after much too long an absence. The program was long and curious, including five pieces of Schubert that, for reasons unfathomable to me, were believed to be having first performances in Boston.

Jerome Hines, a born singing-actor who continues to emerge as one of the most valuable among the younger artists at the Metropolitan, gave his first concert in Boston on March 17. The occasion was the last in the season's always-crowded Boston Morning Musicals in the Hotel Statler ballroom, in aid of the Boston School of Occupational Therapy. With his great talent for the musical stage, and his glorious bass voice, Mr. Hines also has the sensitivity and the discernment of the superior musician. It was remarkable how well he sang Beethoven's *In questa tomba oscura*, and songs of Strauss and Duparc, plus a group in English. In his attempt not to make them sound like opera, Mr. Hines perhaps sang them too "straight" and in too strict a tempo, but his performance was high in expressive power. —CYRUS DURGIN

### Detroit Symphony Plays Paray Work

**DETROIT.**—The Detroit Symphony completed its 1953-54 season on March 18 with an imposing program of choral music—Paul Paray's *Mass in Honor of St. Joan of Arc* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. A capacity audience was on hand for this event. The 300-voice Rackham Symphony Chorus, trained by Maynard Klein, joined the orchestra and soloists—Frances Yeend, Frances Bible, David Lloyd, and Yi-Kwei Sze. Similar to Mr. Paray's interpretation of the Ninth last year, when it also closed the season, the brilliance of the reading was notable. His *Mass*, which employs four soloists and chorus, opened the program. Written in the form of liturgical music, although not intended for church performances, it comprises four movements—Kyrle, Gloria in Excelsis, Sanctus-Benedictus, and Agnus Dei.

This concert concluded the first of the three-year terms under which the orchestra is backed by pledged contributions from local business interests. In preparation for the 1954-55 season, the symphony is offering "shares" at \$5 each. Each purchaser is entitled to a free special concert, in addition to helping relieve any deficit and contributing to the continued excellence of the orchestra. No definite indications as to the success of the "share" sales are apparent yet, but it is an interesting experiment. —DICK FANDEL

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# *Education in New York*

The Mannes College concert calendar for early April listed a program of baroque music for brass ensemble and chamber works by Beethoven and Dvorak on the 5th, and two performances of Donizetti's Don Pasquale by the school's opera department on the 9th and 10th . . . Mannes opera students were also heard in scenes from Don Giovanni, La Bohème, and Samson and Delilah on March 31.

A scholarship at the Juilliard School of Music has been endowed in the name of Max Dreyfus, noted song publisher, by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II. The scholarship will be awarded each year to a young singer of exceptional promise.

The 1954 summer session of the Manhattan School of Music will open this year on June 7 and will continue through July 30. Accredited courses leading to the Bachelor and Masters degrees in music and music education will be offered. Master classes will be given by Dora Zaslavsky and Raphael Bronstein. A summer opera workshop will be under the direction of Rose Landver.

The New York College of Music announces its summer session, beginning for six weeks on June 21. Leslie Hodgson will serve as director of the summer schedule.

Darrell Peter conducted a performance of Debussy's The Blessed Damsel on March 30, with the Fortnightly Chorale of Rockville Centre. He will lead the Shell Oil Chorus, of which he is the regular director, in its annual spring concert on April 28 . . . Mr. Peter will make two tours for the National Guild of Piano Teachers as audition judge during May. His Chorale Fantasy, What Child Is This?, will be published shortly by Carl Fischer, Inc.

Alfred Stobbi-Stohner has been appointed musical advisor for a proposed production of Byron Schiffman's opera-ballet The Raven . . . Recent appearances of young artists from the Stobbi-Stohner studio have included Dolores Mari, soprano, singing in Faust with the Philadelphia La Scalla company, and in Madama Butterfly in New York and on tour; Madeline Voss, who sang in the Little Orchestra Society's presentation of Ariadne auf Naxos at Town Hall last month; William Smith, bass, engaged to sing in the New York City Opera's production of Show Boat; Geraldine Cook, who sang Musetta in a radio performance of La Bohème; Ruth Wolpert, appointed soprano soloist in an Englewood, N. J., church; Douglas Rideout, baritone, currently on Broadway in The Girl in Pink Tights; and Ralph Linn, Theresa Mari, Ann Waugh, Thelma Scott, and Pennyann Green in Me and Juliet; and William Dunlea, tenor, recently arrived from London for concert appearances in Scranton, Penna. A number of Mr. Stobbi-Stohner's pupils are also singing major roles at the Amato Opera in New York.

Elda Ercole's pupil Marjorie McClung, soprano, was one of the four winners this year of the Metropolitan Auditions of the Air. Miss McClung has been studying at the Ercole studio for the past three and a half years . . . Other students are Palmina Lattanzio, soprano, singing on station WHOM and with the Community Opera Company; Lois Winter, soprano, appearing in concert in Atlantic City this month, and weekly on radio and television; Jane Barnfield, soprano, soloist with the Choraleers group; Tom McDuffe, tenor, who has been engaged for leading roles with

stock companies in Dallas, Cleveland, and Lambertville; Edward Johnson, tenor soloist with the Toronto Symphony in New York this month; and James Cosenza, tenor, singing at the Finger Lakes Summer Circus this summer.

May L. Etts is serving as a judge for the Music Education League's piano and theory auditions in New York, and will judge for the National Guild of Piano Teachers in Burlington, Clayton, and Raleigh, N. C., from April 26 to May 11. Miss Etts will also be a member of Guy Maier's faculty for his classes in Bristol, Va., and New York in July. Her current pupils were heard in a two-piano ensemble recital at Carl Fischer Hall on April 9.

Sarah Lawrence College was the scene for the debut of a new chamber ensemble, the New York Chamber Repertory Group, on April 9. The new group was formed through a joining of forces by the Saitenberg Chamber Players and the New York Woodwind Quintet.

## *Other Centers*

The New England Conservatory of Music has announced that several special scholarships are open to qualified students in stringed, brass, and woodwind instruments. The amounts of the scholarships will provide the entire tuition in the major instrument.

A prominent speaker in Boston University's 1954 Founders' Day Conference, held from March 16 to 18, was Curt Sachs, who discussed the improving of man's relationships with man through the mutual enjoyment of music . . . The university's College of Music opera workshop presented a bill of three operas in English early last month under the direction of Sarah Caldwell.

Harvard University announces the retirement of Archibald T. Davison, director of the Harvard Glee Club for nearly a quarter of a century and a member of the Harvard department of music since 1909.

An all-Bartok concert was given at the Peabody Conservatory on March 27 in which Erno Balogh, friend and pupil of the late composer and Peabody faculty member, participated as piano soloist . . . Paul Callaway, organist and choirmaster of Washington (D. C.) Cathedral, will assume the teaching schedule of Richard Ross, late head of the Peabody organ department, for the school's summer session, which begins June 28.

The Music and Arts Institute of San Francisco has issued an illustrated bulletin listing beginning and advanced courses available to children, adults, and college students, including an outline of the curriculum leading to the Bachelor of Music degree.

Alfred Cortot will give ten classes devoted to the study and interpretation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century keyboard works at the Lausanne Conservatory from Sept. 3 to 19.

Harold Berkley will serve as adjudicator for the strings division of the 1954 Greater Spokane Music Festival, being held during the week of May 2.

An innovation in the Eastman School's summer schedule is a band, orchestra, and choral institute designed to give the supervisor-conduc-

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Hans Busch has returned to the United States to organize the summer season of the South Shore Music Circus in Cohasset, Mass., of which he is general manager. Mr. Busch will resume his teaching post at Indiana University this fall.

The Chicago Conservatory presented Myron Carlisle, baritone; Anne Crane Tischer, violinist; and Roy Anderson, pianist, in a faculty recital at Curtis Hall on March 26. The program featured the first performance of Mr. Anderson's Handfuls, a song cycle based on poems by Carl Sandburg.

The Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto will open its four-week summer school on July 5. Alan Rawthorne will head the composers workshop this summer, and Ernesto Barbini the opera workshop. Master classes will be given by Pierre

Souvairan, Swiss pianist; David Weber, American clarinetist; Frederick Jagel; and Alexander Schneider.

San Diego State College has again invited Robert Shaw and Julius Herford to conduct its second choral workshop to be held from July 5 to Aug. 13. Mack Harrell will join them as guest lecturer and recitalist for the final week of the session.

Recent festivals of contemporary music were held at Oberlin College, March 11 to 14, and at Wesleyan College in Macon, Ga., April 5 to 8.

The glee club of Haverford College was joined by other local groups on April 9, 10, and 11 in a three-day Heinrich Schütz festival under the direction of William H. Reese.

The third annual music festival at the University of Houston opened on March 24 with a workshop production of The Marriage of Figaro, under the direction of Bruce Spencer King.

Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minn., presented the first performance in the Northwest of Leonard Bernstein's The Age of Anxiety on March 29. The piano soloist was James Blaha. James W. Kelly conducted the university orchestra.

The State University of Iowa has named Himie Voxman as head of its music department, succeeding Philip Greeley Clapp. Mr. Voxman has been a member of the Iowa faculty since 1936.

Two University of Minnesota scholarships of \$500 each will be awarded to advanced music students to study with Antal Dorati, conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony, during 1954-55. Closing date for applications is May 1.

Joseph Knitzer has resigned from his position as head of the violin department at the Cleveland Institute of Music to accept a full professorship in violin and chairmanship of the string department of the Northwestern University School of Music.

### Howard Shaw Wins NYSTA Award

Howard Shaw, baritone, is the winner of a Town Hall recital sponsored by the New York Singing Teachers Association, the first such award made by the organization. Details were announced by Constance Eberhart, chairman of the Town Hall Award Committee of the association. The judges for the finalists were Maria Kurenko, Ernest McChesney, and Isaac Van Grove. Mr. Shaw's recital is scheduled for Sept. 27, 1954.

The award was developed from the Young Artists' Concerts, which NYSTA has presented at Carl Fischer Hall for the last sixteen years. In 1953-54 nine singers were chosen for three recitals. The new competition is limited to students of members of the association.

Mr. Shaw, a native of Wooster, Ohio, received a Bachelor of Music degree from the College of Wooster. He had to give up a scholarship at the Curtis Institute of Music because of war service. In 1946 he resumed his vocal training in New York, later making appearances in oratorio, opera, and operetta.

### Rosina Lhevinne To Give Los Angeles Course

LOS ANGELES.—Rosina Lhevinne has been engaged by the University of Southern California to give a post-session course from Aug. 2 to 27. The course consists of six private lessons in piano technique and interpretation, and eight repertoire sessions. One scholarship will be awarded in memory of Mme. Lhevinne's late husband, the eminent pianist Josef Lhevinne.



E. Power Biggs at the console of his new Cambridge Portativ

### Biggs Introduces New Instrument on Tour

WASHINGTON, D. C.—In a program arranged by Harold Spivacke, chief of the division of music of the Library of Congress, E. Power Biggs gave the first recital at the library on his new Cambridge Portativ, with which he is making a tour this spring. The new organ may be quickly dismantled, packed in a case, transported in a trailer, and reassembled in only five hours.

### Toronto Conservatory To Offer Masters Degree

TORONTO.—The Royal Conservatory of Music of the University of Toronto has announced that it will offer the degree of Master of Music beginning this fall, thus making Toronto the first university in Canada to offer this advanced degree in music. Masters-degree candidates will have the opportunity of concentrating in one of four areas of study—composition, theory, history and literature of music, and music education.

Commenting on the new program, Arnold Walter, director of the conservatory's faculty of music, asserted that "it has long been felt that our musicians need not necessarily go to American music schools, or abroad, for a degree that Canadian schools are capable of administering on their own. . . . This degree at Toronto is a real step forward and a concrete indication of further maturing of musical education in the country".

### Ellen Ballon To Be Honored By McGill University

TORONTO.—Ellen Ballon has been notified by Sir Cyril James, principal of McGill University, that their Senate has unanimously resolved to confer on her the honorary degree of Music Doctorate on the occasion of the celebration of the jubilee year of the founding of the McGill Conservatorium and Faculty of Music. The pianist has been asked to attend the Founder's Day Convocation on Oct. 6 "in order that your Alma Mater may on this occasion publicly recognize your great talents and very distinguished career". Miss Ballon recently made a return engagement as soloist with the National Symphony in Washington, D. C.

### Antonini Conducts Collegiate Orchestra

SCRANTON, PENNA. — Alfredo Antonini, who has conducted the major portion of the CBS Twentieth Century Concert Hall series inaugurated this year, made a recent guest appearance here conducting the Pennsylvania Collegiate Festival Orchestra, an ensemble representing seventeen Pennsylvania colleges and universities. For Mr. Antonini this all-state festival concert marked his first experience in working with amateurs.

### Mannes Opera Group To Tour Minnesota

A three-week tour in Minnesota with a production of Don Pasquale and a New York premiere of Jan Meyerowitz' opera Eastward in Eden highlight the Mannes College opera workshop during April and May. The Minnesota tour of Don Pasquale, which will cover sixteen cities from April 19 to May 9, will be under the auspices of the Concert and Lecture Service of the University of Minnesota and marks the first time that the Mannes workshop has gone on tour. Otto Guth will serve as musical director for the Donizetti opera, with Ralph Herbert as stage director.

Meyerowitz' Eastward in Eden, which will be performed on May 26 and 27 at Hunter Playhouse, is based on the stage play by Dorothy Gardner, who has written the libretto. The work will be conducted by Carl Bamberg and staged by Mr. Herbert, both of the Mannes College Opera Department.

### Auditions Being Held For Music and Dance Center

Dean Eckertsen, musical director of the New York Music and Dance Center, is auditioning young professional and student artists for the Center's opera, choral, and orchestra workshops and showcases. Choral singers are being recruited for recording purposes. Applicants should write Mr. Eckertsen at 236 W. 55th St., New York 19.

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## Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre Makes Only Appearance in New York Area

SINCE the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre did not come to Broadway, Broadway went to the de Mille Dance Theatre, or so it seemed, for the company attracted a distinguished audience heavily sprinkled with Manhattanese in its sole New York appearance, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, on March 23.

In the Feb. 15 Special Issue of *MUSICAL AMERICA* I published an article about Miss de Mille's influence upon the American theatre, in which she was quoted in detail about this company and the repertoire she created for it. Seeing this program "in the flesh" brought home many of her points. It was a delightful evening of varied dance, superbly performed.

The program was made up of Ballet (adapted from *Brigadoon*); a solo, Ballet Class, danced by Gemze de Lappe; The Cherry Tree Legend, a sung and danced version of the famous old folk song as the American mountaineers who still sing it might

have conceived it; Gold Rush (adapted from *Paint Your Wagon*); a group of Dances of Elegance 1860-1920; and Hell on Wheels 1863.

In *Brigadoon*, and in *Paint Your Wagon*, Miss de Mille introduced a fresh and original note of lyricism, tragic awareness, and tender humanity into "show business" without losing her sense of humor. These concert versions of the dances do not adhere strictly to the stories of the musical plays, but they are essentially similar. In *Ballad*, Lidija Franklin, as the Girl, was especially poignant in the funeral dance. James Jamieson, a versatile dancer and a vital stage personality, was superb as the Rival. James Mitchell was admirable as the Suitor, if not so dynamic as his fellow-dancers.

Gold Rush is even more successful as a condensation and adaptation than *Ballad*. Here, Miss de Mille has succeeded in keeping the dramatic threads clear and in sustaining choreographic invention throughout. Rufus Smith was excellent as the narrator, as he was also as a singer throughout the program. Gemze de Lappe and Mr. Mitchell danced the pas de deux of the Dance Hall Girl and the Miner with profound feeling; and the whole company distinguished itself. Gold Rush takes themes encrusted with clichés and makes something new and stirring out of them.

The solo, Ballet Class, is a touching and amusing picture of a slave to technique. It probably has autobiographical overtones. Miss de Lappe performed it charmingly. The Cherry Tree Legend is Miss de Mille's closest approach to routine on the program, but it is wholly sincere in spirit and it has some inventive episodes. Miss Franklin, as Mary, and Casimir Kocik, as Joseph, suggested a sort of rude grandeur in their characterizations. Mr. Smith and Raimonda Orselli had the singers' roles.

### Two Satires

The Dances of Elegance were made up of a romantic waltz and two satires. Miss Franklin and Robert Calder danced the Waltz from *Bloomer Girl* with élan. Evelyn Taylor and Mr. Kocik were extremely funny in *The Parvenues*, a hilarious skit about two people who do not "belong" making an involuntary show of themselves at an elegant gathering. In this duet Miss de Mille has blended dance and pantomime in a captivating little vignette of a bygone era. The Short Lecture and Demonstration on the Evolution of Ragtime, with choreography by Anna Sokolov, was also clever. Miss de Lappe and Mr. Jamieson performed the tricky choreography of the Demonstrators brilliantly, and Mr. Mitchell was nothing short of superb as the Lecturer, Oscar Budrous. I found Miss Sokolov's choreography too forced and too obviously geared for laughs. Miss de Mille's dance humor is subtler and more human, for all its slapstick touches.

Hell on Wheels was something of an anticlimax, because it was reminiscent of Gold Rush without being anywhere near as interesting and because the script was weak. The company danced and acted it very well. Mr. Smith, Mr. Jamieson, Miss Taylor, Bunty Kelley, Lizanne Truex, Dusty Worrall, Mr. Mitchell, and the others made it seem better than it was. The orchestra under François Jaroschy was unusually fine. Trude Rittman's arrangements, Peggy Clark's and Motley's production designs, Motley's costumes, Don Walker's orchestrations, and Miss Clark's lighting all bore witness to Miss de Mille's high



Iva Kitchell

standards. And last but not least, the audience had a wonderful time.

—ROBERT SABIN

### Iva Kitchell, Dance Satirist Brooklyn Academy of Music, April 3

Iva Kitchell is not only extremely funny but extremely skillful, which makes her dance satires especially amusing to dancers. There were several of them in her audience at this recital. She opened this program with *Coloratura*, in which she points up the similarity between "those two Prima Donnas, the coloratura soprano and the ballerina". Not only was her movement murderously suggestive of certain ballet personalities who shall remain nameless, but her singing in this number was worthy of the immortal Florence Foster Jenkins. Chorus Girl is an evocative vignette from the 1920s. Salesman brings out Miss Kitchell's abilities as a pantomimist, as does the delightful skit, *Maisie at the "Moovies"*.

*Valse Triste* was a tour de force. Miss Kitchell not only danced it forwards but backwards and at double tempo. It was inspired by her watching a film shown on a home projector. Ze Ballet remains one of the most amusing take-offs of opera ballet, and how anyone can perform the Dance of the Hours with a straight face after seeing it, I do not know. *Bacchanale* is another gruesome reminder of what passes for choreographic art in many of our temples of opera. One of the best works of the evening was an encore, compounded of overtones of Graham, Humphrey, and other leaders of contemporary dance, in which Miss Kitchell reduced her audience to happy tears. Harvey Brown was her expert accompanist.

—R. S.

### New York City Ballet Ends Successful Season

On March 21, the New York City Ballet closed a ten-week season at the City Center, following its most successful local engagement from a financial standpoint. The run grossed \$435,105, involving an estimated loss of around \$12,000.

The relatively profitable season resulted from the popular success of the full-length production of *The Nutcracker*. The company's schedule was revised considerably to accommodate extra performances of the work, and in the final week it was the only ballet given.

Major changes in casting in the Balanchine-Tchaikovsky ballet occurred because of the illness at one time or another of Andre Eglevsky, Diana Adams, and Tanaquil LeClercq. Miss Adams took over the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy in some performances and of the Dewdrop in others. Jillana also danced the part of the Dewdrop. Patricia Wilde and Janet Reed alternated as the head

Mirliton; Mr. Eglevsky and Nicholas Magallanes as the Sugar Plum Fairy's Cavalier; Alberta Grant and Carol Cincibus as Clara; and Elliot Feld and Rusty Nickel as the Nutcracker.

Other shifts in casting included Mr. Magallanes as the Prince and Carolyn George in the pas de trois in *Swan Lake*; Jillana in place of Miss LeClercq in *Opus 34*; Maria Tallchief as Sacred Love and Barbara Milberg as Profane Love in *Iluminations*; Irene Larsson in *The Afternoon of a Faun*; and Miss Tallchief in *Valse-Fantaisie*.

Jerome Robbins' latest ballet, *Quartet*, choreographed to Prokofiev's Second String Quartet, was given its premiere on Feb. 19, with Miss Wilde, Herbert Bliss, Jillana, Jacques d'Amboise, Yvonne Mounsey, and Todd Bolender as the principal dancers.

Lew Christensen's *Con Amore*, introduced last season, was given on March 10 in a slightly restaged version, with new sets and costumes by Esteban Frances. Miss Wilde appeared as the Captain of the Amazons, Mr. d'Amboise as the Thief, Miss Reed as the Mistress, and Edith Brozak as Eros.

On March 11, the company revived William Dollar's *The Five Gifts*, with Mr. Bolender, Miss Mounsey, Miss George, Patricia Savoia, Jillana, Barbara Fallis, Ruth Sabotka, and Mr. d'Amboise. Nicholas Kopeikine was the piano soloist in the accompanying score, Dohnanyi's *Variations on a Nursery Rhyme*.

The New York City Ballet will make a summer tour, to include engagements in Chicago, May 26-June 6; Seattle, June 10-16; San Francisco, June 19-July 3; Los Angeles, July 5-Aug. 14; and San Diego, Aug. 16-21. It will open a five-week season at the City Center on Aug. 31.

### Prokofiev's Last Ballet Has Moscow Premiere

Moscow.—Sergei Prokofiev's ballet *The Tale of the Stone Flower*, to which the composer devoted the last three years of his life, was given its first performance at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre in February. The work received its premiere with Russia's noted ballerina Galina Ulanova in the chief role after nearly four years of preparation, in which Prokofiev participated until his death a year ago. The fairy-tale story has to do with a young stone worker who is dissatisfied with his work and decides to seek out the mistress of Copper Mountain, who is reputed to possess the most beautiful stones in her cavern in the heart of the Ural Mountains. The work did not receive unqualified praise, but the Moscow critics and audiences were unanimous in describing the score as one of the loveliest and most lyric that Prokofiev ever wrote.

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## Toscanini Career Ends

Victor, a considerable backlog of test records to approve, and a possible return to his native Italy for the summer.

Mr. Toscanini's decision to retire was first made known to David Sarnoff, chairman of the boards of RCA and NBC. A letter of resignation, addressed to Mr. Sarnoff, lay unsigned on the conductor's desk for nearly two weeks. On March 25, his birthday, while sitting at lunch at his home in Riverdale, he jumped up suddenly and went to his room without a word to sign the letter, which said in part:

At this season of the year seventeen years ago you sent me an invitation to become the Musical Director of an orchestra to be created especially for me for the purpose of broadcasting symphonic music throughout the United States.

Year after year it has been a joy for me to know that the music played by the NBC Symphony Orchestra has been acclaimed by the vast radio audience all over the United States and abroad.

And now the sad time has come when I must reluctantly lay aside my baton and say goodbye to my orchestra, and in leaving I want you to know that I shall carry with me rich memories of these years of music making and heartfelt gratitude to you and the National Broadcasting Company for having made them possible.

In the days that preceded the final Sunday concert, Mr. Toscanini's emotional tensions brought on periods of questioning and doubt. A few hours before the Thursday rehearsal, he told his son, Walter, that he was not sure he remembered the Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan and Isolde well enough to conduct it in the final concert, as originally planned. He listened to his own recording of the piece, and even attempted to refresh his memory of the score at the piano, but he insisted the music eluded him.

### Changes Program

During the Thursday rehearsal he led the orchestra through the other Wagner works on the program, but on Friday he had made up his mind to substitute the Venusberg music from Tannhäuser for the Tristan excerpt. The rehearsal went without a hitch.

The Saturday afternoon dress rehearsal brought a not unusual show of temperament. Although the rehearsal had been going well, he suddenly stopped conducting and rushed to his dressing room. He refused to return to the stage, and the orchestra was sent home for the day.

On Sunday afternoon the situation was still tense, and NBC officials considered playing some of Mr. Toscanini's recordings over the air if, as many close to the conductor felt, he would not conduct his farewell performance. But by concert time the Maestro was on hand to "say goodbye" to his orchestra and to the millions of listeners across the country to whom his name is now legend.

—CHRISTIE BARTER

## Seattle Appointment And Sternberg Debut

SEATTLE.—As previously announced, Milton Katims, associate conductor of the NBC Symphony, has signed a season's contract as resident conductor of the Seattle Symphony. His tenure will be from September, 1954, to May, 1955, with time out for his prior commitments in Houston.

The 44-year-old conductor comes to this city at a propitious time. This will be his first permanent orchestral post after many years of mounting success under Arturo Toscanini and an international career as violist with various chamber ensembles. The Seattle Symphony, too, is ending its fiftieth anniversary season on an optimistic note. The budget was bolstered by consistently sold-out houses at the Orpheum Theatre, the orchestra's new home this year, and a gift of \$20,000 from its women's committee. It also launched a "family night" plan of twelve neighborhood concerts this season with notable success.

Although it is still news when a young American conductor directs a large American orchestra, Jonathan Sternberg's appearance with the Seattle organization on Feb. 2 was the more significant in that it marked his podium debut in this country. Mr. Sternberg, who has been active in Vienna for the past six years, has been known here only by way of recordings. First impressions on watching him in performance are that he is a sincere, capable musician who should find much new musical ground to plow in his home soil. The fact of his debut was almost buried in the attention showered on the evening's soloist, Isaac Stern, who was heard in the Beethoven Violin Concerto.

—MAXINE CUSHING GRAY

## Spartanburg Symphony Takes Part in Festival

SPARTANBURG, S. C.—The Spartanburg Symphony, conducted by Henry Janiec, will wind up its 25th anniversary season by participating in the annual Spartanburg Music Festival. On April 30 the orchestra will be heard in a festival program devoted to two-piano works by Mozart and Poulenc, with Appleton and Field as soloists; the premiere of The Birthday Nocturne, by Edwin Gerschlowski, festival director and dean of the Converse College school of music; and the appearance of a 300-voice school choir, directed by Mrs. Frank B. Crews, supervisor of music in the city's elementary schools.

The orchestra will also take part in other events of the festival: a production of Puccini's Gianni Schicchi, in a youth matinee on April 28; and a coupling of Gianni Schicchi with Cavalleria Rusticana, in an evening bill on April 29. The two operas, to be sung in English, are under the direction of John Richards McCrae.

As part of its 100th anniversary season, Steinway & Sons are co-operating with the orchestra in presenting Appleton and Field in the festival concert. William Steinway and other company officials are expected to attend the event.

## Cleveland Summer Pops Plans Sixteenth Season

CLEVELAND.—The Cleveland Summer Orchestra's Pops series will open its sixteenth season on June 3, with concerts continuing on Thursday and Saturday evenings thereafter. As in the past two seasons Louis Lane will be resident conductor and will conduct several of the concerts. Guest conductors will include Andre Kostelanetz, Leroy Anderson, Frank Black, Boris Goldovsky, and Rudolph Ringwall. Mr. Ringwall, who led these Pops concerts through their first thirteen seasons, will return to the series for the first time in three years.

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Members of Lohengrin cast in the Pittsburgh Opera production. From the left, Carlos Alexander, Telramund; Eleanor Steber, Elsa; Richard Karp, conductor; Margery Mayer, Ortrud; Ramon Vinay, Lohengrin; and Désiré Defrère, stage director

## Pittsburgh Opera Season Reaches Climax with Lohengrin Performance

**Pittsburgh** TWO excellent performances of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, on March 25 and 27, brought to a close the best season to date of the Pittsburgh Opera Society. Director Richard Karp had at his disposal for the second season the local symphony orchestra, which made the Mozart and the previous Lohengrin as fine-sounding performances as one hears in many opera houses of Europe.

Armando Agnini's simplification of scenery circumvented the difficulties of our local stage, and this accomplishment, with the orchestra and Mr. Karp's good fortune in soloists, made the season outstanding.

Eight worthy artists were heard in *Don Giovanni*. Ellen Faul's superb technique, skill in the Mozart style, and warm natural voice made her Donna Anna an immediate success. Alice Richmond's Donna Elvira was well contrasted in characterization, psychologically well studied, and convincingly sung; Ruth Cotton's Zerlina was a consistently charming peasant picture and sung with real humor.

Ralph Herbert's Don, Lorenzo Alvar's Leporello, and Lloyd Harris' Masetto made a trio of admirable buffo artists. Rudolf Petrak gave us both of Don Ottavio's arias with more ease than is usual with lyric tenors. Robert Anderson's dark bass was ideally cast for the Commendatore.

Further productions of the season included *La Bohème*, *Faust*, and *The Barber of Seville*. Of the singers new to Pittsburgh, Lucine Amara and John Alexander in the Puccini work gave indication of substantially fine futures for both young singers. Dorothy Wareskjold's Marguerite and David Poleri's Faust matched sympathetically with Jan Rubes' Mephistopheles. Cesare Bardelli's Figaro and especially Gerhard Pechner's Dr. Bartolo were admirably restrained, well sung, and missed nothing of Rossini's buffo spirit.

Lohengrin transplanted two artists of Bayreuth to this city, with Eleanor Steber singing better than ever before in our company as Elsa, and Ramon Vinay in the title role seconding the spirit of tenderness that remained consistent throughout the opera. Margery Mayer's Ortrud and Carlos Alexander's Telramund were expressively sinister without the exaggerated gesture that too often mars these roles. Gil Ferrando sang the King and Ronald Watson the Herald. This

performance established an attendance record unusual for German opera in this town, where the Italian repertory almost usurps our energy and financial allowance.

—J. FRED LISSFELT

## Metropolitan

(Continued from page 21) sounded well both in Adalgisa's solo arias and in the difficult duets with Norma. Miss Milanov, after a nervous beginning in the *Casta Diva*, sang with impressive authority and beauty of tone. Mr. Siepi, Mr. Penno, and the others also contributed to a performance that made one realize that it was high time that Norma was restored to the repertoire. Fausto Cleva conducted ably.

—R. S.

### Aida, April 1

In the season's fifth performance of Verdi's *Aida*, George London and Norman Scott joined the cast for the first time this season. Mr. London as Amonasro, and Mr. Scott as Ramfis. Until Amonasro's appearance in Act II, Scene 2, this performance had been a rather routine affair, but Mr. London injected both vitality and artistic imagination into the proceedings. His make-up was excellent, his bearing magnetic, and his diction was the best of the evening.

Herva Nelli was heard in the title role; Gino Penno was the Radames; Nell Rankin, Amneris; Lubomir Vichogonov, the King; Paul Franke, the Messenger; and Margaret Roggero, the Priestess. Owing to the indisposition of Renato Cellini, Kurt Adler conducted, in a generally competent if pedestrian fashion. The ballet contributed a note of comic relief to a rather humdrum evening. A word of praise should go to Miss Rankin for her singing and acting in the judgment scene. Her portrayal of Amneris' anguish was extraordinarily vivid and convincing.

—R. S.

### Cavalleria Rusticana and Pagliacci, April 2

Astrid Varnay sang her first *Santuzza* of the season, a performance of incandescent tone and notable emotional power. Miss Varnay rose particularly to the scene of confrontation with Turiddu, which had many

of the accents of high tragedy. The others participants were Kurt Baum, a mature and full-toned Turiddu; Mildred Miller, a poised and sultry Lola; Frank Valentino, somewhat dry-voiced, but a virile and forceful Alfio. Thelma Votipka sang sympathetically as Mama Lucia.

The cast for *Pagliacci* included Lucine Amara as an effective Nedda, and Ramon Vinay, a strongly emotional and full-toned Canio. Leonard Warren made a masterly character portrait of Tonio and sang throughout with finely modulated tones. Charles Anthony, as Beppe, excelled in his pleasing delivery of the *Serenade*. Renato Capecci was a persuasive Silvio, though not as lyrical as might have been desirable. The chorus and orchestra scored under the baton of Alberto Erede.

—R. M. K.

### Carmen, April 3, 2:00

The broadcast matinee of *Carmen* on April 3 brought the season's first performance of the role of Micaëla by Victoria de los Angeles. This alone would have justified a special trip to the opera house, for this artist never fails to grace anything she does. Her performance was a model of vocal artistry and of dramatic sincerity. Even the most casual phrases were exquisitely shaped. But the entire cast was in best form. Risë Stevens, who 36 hours before had flown from Milan, where she had been singing at La Scala, sang the title role with voluptuous beauty of tone and with constant feeling for ensemble as well as solo effect. Richard Tucker was a compelling Don José, building powerful dramatic climaxes. Frank Guarera again demonstrated the refinement, control, and stylistic sensitivity that he has been developing this season. His Escamillo was elegant as well as flamboyant. And the others in the cast were admirable: Heidi Krall, as Frasquita; Margaret Roggero, as Mercedes; Osie Hawkins, as Zuniga; Clifford Harvuot, as Morales; George Cehanovsky, as Dancaire; and Alessio De Paolis, as Remendado. Tibor Kozma conducted with careful consideration for the tempos set earlier by Pierre Monteux, but with an authority and feeling of his own.

—R. S.

### Il Barbiere di Siviglia, April 3

The sixth performance of Rossini's opera differed from the first only in the appearance of Jerome Hines as Don Basilio—his first this season. With the assistance of some wonderfully exaggerated make-up, the American bass created a character whose mere appearance and just about

every move was cause for laughter, and he sang with the voluminous, rich tone for which he is noted. The production, as handsome as one as the Metropolitan has turned out in recent seasons, was dominated by the rather remarkable comic artistry of Fernando Corena as Dr. Bartolo. As before, his colleagues were Roberta Peters, Jean Madeira, Cesare Valletti, Robert Merrill, George Cehanovsky, Alessio De Paolis, and Rudolf Mayreder. Alberto Erede's conducting was clean and alive.

—R. A. E.

### OTHER PERFORMANCES

The Metropolitan presented its first gala performance of operatic excerpts in seven seasons to a sold-out house on March 27. The program contained the Overtures to *La Forza del Destino* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*; the second act of *La Traviata*, with Licia Albanese, Jan Peerce, and Robert Merrill singing the leading roles; the opening scene of the third act of *Don Carlo*, with Jerome Hines, Robert Merrill, Hans Hotter, Eleanor Steber, and Blanche Tiebom; and the third act of *Rigoletto*, with Richard Tucker, Leonard Warren, and Roberta Peters. The ballet company, led by Janet Collins, contributed the *Dance of the Hours* from *La Gioconda* and the *Bacchanale* from *Samson et Dalila*.

Completing the record for the period March 10 to April 3, there was a performance of *Fledermaus* on the 10th in which Brian Sullivan sang his first Alfred of the season, and performances of *Don Giovanni* and *La Bohème* on Saturday, March 13, with Nadine Conner appearing as Zerlina for the first time this year in the Mozart opera. The evening performance of *La Bohème* marked the return to the Metropolitan of Ferruccio Tagliavini, who sang the role of Rodolfo. It was also the tenor's only appearance at the opera house this season.

Gino Penno substituted for an indisposed Richard Tucker as Don Alvaro in the season's last performance of *La Forza del Destino* on the afternoon of March 20.

### New York AGO Presents Chamber-Music Program

The New York City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists presented a program of chamber music on April 12 at the American Academy of Arts and Letters Auditorium. Participating artists were Claire Coci, organist; Harold Heeremans, violinist; Heinrich Joachim, cellist; and Thomas Richner, pianist.

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